

HERPES BLOOD TESTS FACT SHEET AND QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

If there is a visible symptom present, the standard procedure is to perform a viral culture. However, if there are no visible symptoms present, it can become more difficult to obtain a test for herpes. Currently, there are three blood tests available the Herpes Resource Center (HRC) recommends. The HRC does not recommend outdated standard, widely available blood tests because they have been shown in research studies to be unreliable. This can cause unnecessary worry or concern for many people. The following is information on HRC recommended tests and applicable situations for the blood tests.

	POckit® Rapid Test	HerpeSelect™		Herpes Western Blot (WB)
		ELISA Kits	Immunoblot Kit	
Manufacturer	Diagnology Inc.	Focus Technologies (formerly MRL Diagnostics)		University of Washington
FDA Approved	Yes (August 1999)	Yes (February 2000)	Yes (April 2000)	N/A (considered research "gold standard")
Antibodies Detected	HSV-2 only	HSV-1 -or- HSV-2	HSV-1 -and- HSV-2	HSV 1 -and/or- HSV-2
Sensitivity (no false negatives)	96-100% accurate (compared to WB)	100% accurate (compared to WB for HSV-2)	100% accurate (compared to WB for HSV-2)	>99% accurate
Specificity (no false positives)	97-99% accurate (compared to WB)	98% accurate (compared to WB for HSV-2)	100% accurate (compared to WB for HSV-2)	>99% accurate
HRC Recommended Window Period	12 to 16 weeks after exposure	12 to 16 weeks after exposure	12 to 16 weeks after exposure	12 to 16 weeks after exposure
Collection Method	Finger prick	Blood draw (sent to local lab)	Blood draw (sent to local lab)	Blood draw (shipped to Washington)
Test Location	In provider office	Various Labs	Various Labs	University of Washington (Virology dept.)
Result Time	Less than 10 min	~1 to 2 weeks	~1 to 2 weeks	~2 weeks
Can Be Used During Pregnancy	No (has not been researched)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cost of Test (can vary due to other provider or lab fees)	\$80	\$100	\$170	\$130
Phone Number	Toll-free (877) 229-5210	Toll-free (800) 445-4032 (to find a lab in a specific area)		(207) 598-6066 (for providers ONLY)
Web site	http://www.pockit.com	http://www.focusanswers.com		http://depts.washington.edu/herpes/