



Department of Chemical Pathology

From: Prof CWK Lam
Hon Chief of Service
Department of Chemical Pathology

To: All COSS,
All DOMs and Ward Managers
All Doctors
NTE Cluster Hospitals

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Date: 15 October 2004

**NTE Cluster-Wide Policy on Request for Plasma AST Assay
Implementation Date: 1 November 2004**

Aspartate aminotransferase (AST) is a ubiquitous enzyme of wide tissue distribution. It is neither liver- or cardiac-specific. Therefore, use of plasma AST for aiding the diagnosis of liver or myocardial damage has been largely replaced by alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and cardiac troponin (cTn) assays.

Please note that with effect from 1 November 2004, we shall implement the following NTE cluster-wide policy for AST:

- (1) AST will no longer be part of the standard liver function test (LFT)
- (2) Standalone request for AST will require justification and prior approval by Duty Biochemist
- (3) Any unauthorised request will NOT be processed
- (4) Blood samples for AST will be kept for 24 hours just in case there might be an appeal.

In case there is any clinical situation that requires plasma AST activity for special diagnosis or management, or if there is any enquiry for special service, please contact our Duty Biochemist at 2632-2685 or 2632-2331, or page through PWH Operator at 2632-2211 for discussion of any special arrangement.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Prof CWK Lam

Copy to:
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