

MEMORANDUM # 119

TO: UNC Hospitals Attending Physicians, Housestaff, Clinical Nurse Coordinators,
Department Heads and Supervisors

FROM: Melissa Miller, PhD, Director, Molecular Microbiology Laboratory
Peter H. Gilligan, PhD, Director, Clinical Microbiology/Immunology
Laboratories
Mark E. Brecher, MD, Director, McLendon Clinical Laboratories
Alan Kerr, M (ASCP), Supervisor Clinical Microbiology/Immunology
Laboratories

DATE: February 1, 2007

**SUBJECT: New *Chlamydia trachomatis* Strain Detected – Potential for False Negative
PCR Results**

The Clinical Microbiology/Immunology Laboratories have been informed by Roche Diagnostics of confirmed reports of false negative *Chlamydia trachomatis* results in Sweden using their COBAS Amplicor PCR system. This is the system currently used in our laboratory. These false negative results are due to a newly-recognized strain of *C. trachomatis* which has a deletion of approximately 350 base-pairs in the DNA amplification target region used by the COBAS Amplicor system. Specimens containing *C. trachomatis* demonstrating this deletion will yield false-negative results when tested by the COBAS Amplicor system.

To date, the occurrence of this organism appears to be localized to southern Sweden, although neither the prevalence nor geographic distribution is yet known. Specimens containing *C. trachomatis* without this deletion are not impacted and will continue to be detected as usual.

If you have any questions regarding PCR testing for *Chlamydia trachomatis*, please contact the Molecular Microbiology Laboratory at 966-6101.