

Institute of Psychiatry  
Clinical Neurobiology  
Laboratories  
67 President Street  
PO Box 250861  
Charleston • SC 29425  
  
(843) 792-5441  
(843) 792-1226  
[www.cnl-lab.com](http://www.cnl-lab.com)

**January 8, 2009**

**Memo: Change of %CDT Testing Method**

**From: Raymond F. Anton, MD**  
**Director of the Clinical Neurobiology Laboratory**  
**Institute of Psychiatry**

Effective **Tuesday, January 20, 2009**, a new method for carbohydrate deficient transferrin testing (%CDT) for heavy alcohol consumption will be initiated in the Clinical Neurobiology Laboratory. **The cut-off value and the test designation will change: In the new assay the cut-off to detect heavy alcohol consumption is 1.7%.** Under the old/discontinued assay, the cut-off for detecting heavy alcohol consumption was 2.6%. The new test will be designated **%dCDT** because the assay will focus solely on one isoform, disialo-transferrin, reported to be the most specific for heavy alcohol consumption. The new, improved assay is based on high-pressure liquid chromatography with spectrophotometric detection, replacing the older microcolumn/turbidimetric assay that measured several CDT isoforms and grouped them as CDT. Certain genetic variant transferrin isoform patterns that could lead to false positive results in the old assay may be identified by the new assay. When such variant patterns are observed in the new assay, interpretive comments will be provided.

The new **%dCDT** test can also be used to monitor alcohol consumption over time. Changes of 30% up or down from an initial (baseline) patient value might indicate substantially more (**%dCDT** showing a 30 % increase) or less (**%dCDT** showing a 30% decrease) alcohol consumption. This change could be clinically meaningful even if the initial **%dCDT** value was below the 1.7% cut-off. The new test, just like its predecessor, can be used both for screening and monitoring of heavy alcohol consumption.

Please make note of this change and be prepared to see results reported as **%dCDT** on **Tuesday, January 20, 2009**, and thereafter. Also, please note the change in cut-off values and the new interpretive notes accompanying the **%dCDT** test when appropriate. As always, clinical correlation is necessary in the interpretation of this, and all, laboratory tests. If you have any questions, please call or email the Clinical Neurobiology Laboratory at the Institute of Psychiatry or visit our website at [www.cnl-lab.com](http://www.cnl-lab.com).