

PHYSICIAN

NEWS BRIEF

News about Covenant HealthCare from the Office of Physician Relations
December 2, 2013

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Laboratory Update: ESR Testing

Effective January 2, 2014, Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate (ESR) testing will be discontinued. The laboratory test as a replacement is the C-Reactive Protein (CRP). The discontinuation of the ESR addresses the laboratory's need for better test utilization, while continuing to provide physicians with the tools necessary to assess inflammation. Based on current data (including a Mayo Clinic study), CRP measurements appear to be the most useful for monitoring patient response to therapy after the primary diagnosis of invasive infections or inflammatory diseases, for monitoring patients after major surgical procedures and those with serious burns. Monitoring CRP over time may be used to assess for recurrent disease, a secondary process or ineffective therapy. In addition, CRP appears to be suited to most applications for which the ESR is used but offers many advantages. Questions or concerns may be directed to Daniel K. Warner at 583.6746 or Dr. Nicholas J. Hruby at 583.6703.

Laboratory Update: Procalcitonin (PCT)

Procalcitonin (PCT) is indicated for risk stratification and monitoring the progression of sepsis in critically ill patients. PCT has been shown to be useful for differentiating patients with Sepsis from those with a systemic inflammatory response not related to a bacterial infection. PCT levels are usually low in viral infections, chronic inflammatory conditions and autoimmune disorders. Levels of PCT generally increase in Sepsis with values > 0.5 ng/ml, and often reach values >10 ng/ml in patients with severe sepsis and septic shock.

Early detection and intervention have been shown to be crucial for improvement of outcomes in patients with Sepsis. PCT is another piece of information that helps improve patient care and the assessment of patients with sepsis. PCT results should be used in conjunction with the patient's other laboratory results and clinical signs and symptoms. Interpretation of the PCT result should be in context of the patient's clinical situation.

Multidisciplinary Rounding Pilot underway

In an effort to provide safe, efficient, and patient-centered care, Covenant unveiled a pilot program for multidisciplinary rounds at Harrison 3 South in October. These rounds are conducted on hospital medicine patients exclusively admitted to this unit. The rounding team is composed of a nurse, a pharmacist, a discharge planner and a hospitalist. These disciplines come together and utilize their clinical expertise to determine care priorities, establish daily goals and plan disposition. Patients and families are encouraged to participate during rounds in an effort to improve communication and coordination of care.

iPACS Training

As most of you know, iPACS recently became the external connection to the PACS system. For those with questions, on line training is available at www.covenanthealthcare.com >>> physicians tab >>> iPACS training. The site includes user guides as well as training videos. For questions, please contact Shane Benson, PACS Administrator, at 583.7066.

ETC.

Covenant Receives 2014 Women's Choice Award

Covenant HealthCare has received the 2014 Women's Choice Award® ranking among America's Best Hospitals for Patient Experience in Obstetrics. The distinction is the only award that identifies the country's best healthcare institutions based on robust criteria that consider female patient satisfaction, clinical excellence, and what women say they want from a hospital, including quality physician communications, responsiveness of nurses and support staff, cleanliness and trusted referrals from other women. See more about this award in the December 2 issue of Covenant Connections.

Covenant Receives "A" for Safety from Leapfrog Group

Our devotion to keeping patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors has earned us the only "A" safety rating in the region from The Leapfrog Group's Blue Ribbon Panel. This panel is made up of patient safety experts from around the country. Patient Safety is the core value of Covenant HealthCare from the board of directors to the leaders to the staff and to the physicians. For details, or to see a list of state rankings, visit www.hospitalsafetyscore.org.



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