



VIDRL

Victorian Infectious Diseases
Reference Laboratory

7th May 2026

The Peter Doherty Institute
for Infection and Immunity

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Dear Head of Department,

RE: Hantavirus Testing

In the setting of the increased media coverage on hantavirus due to a cluster of cases on a cruise ship, we would like to advise laboratories that we have NATA-accredited hantavirus PCR assays (both real-time and conventional) and hantavirus IgG/IgM serology available for testing for patients with appropriate clinical presentation and epidemiology.

We have reviewed the primer/probes of our assays and based on an in-silico assessment of >4000 hantavirus sequences on Genbank, we are confident in the performance of our assay for all old world and new world hantaviruses, including Andes virus.

The recommended specimen types for testing include EDTA blood or serum. Urine, respiratory samples or kidney/lung tissue may also be suitable depending on clinical syndrome. Samples from suspected hantavirus cases are classified as Category A biological hazard class (Assigned UN2814; IATA Hazard Class 6.2, Packing Instruction 602; proper shipping name "Infectious substances, affecting humans"). As such, these samples should be packaged appropriately for transport and transported via a reputable courier (e.g. World Courier).

As hantavirus is a risk group 3 organism which requires physical containment 3 level processing, it is important that any suspected cases are discussed immediately with VIDRL to ensure appropriate specimen transport and processing.

Please phone the

- VIDRL Registrar during business hours (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) on 0427 285 781 or
- Laboratory Manager on Call (outside of business hours) on 0438 599 439.

Non-urgent general enquiries can be directed to

- Dr Kathy Jackson (Principal Scientist) Kathy.Jackson@vidrl.org.au or
- Mr. Thomas Tran (Section Head) Thomas.Tran@mh.org.au

Kind regards,

K. Bond

Dr Katherine Bond

Acting Director

Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory (VIDRL)



A joint venture between The University of Melbourne and The Royal Melbourne Hospital