

June 4th, 2026

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To: IH Acute Care, IH Long-Term Care, IH Primary Care and Urgent Primary Care, IH Practitioners

From: Microbiology Working Group, Dr. Amanda Wilmer, Medical Director, Microbiology, Melinda Carrier, Health Services Director

Re: **Dermatophyte Testing in Interior Health**

Effective June 10th, 2026, Interior Health Laboratories will implement a new molecular test for fungal nail infections (onychomycosis). This test is performed on nail clippings and provides faster results than traditional culture. Hair and skin scrapings will continue to be tested by culture only.

Important Information

What's New

- **Nail clippings** will be tested using **molecular method** (replaces culture)
 - Includes *Trichophyton spp.*, *Epidermophyton floccosum*, *Microsporum spp.*, and *Candida albicans*
- **Hair and skin scrapings will continue to be tested by culture**
- Testing will be performed at Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) Microbiology Lab. With the introduction of molecular testing at KGH, fungal culture is also being transitioned from Royal Inland Hospital to KGH

How to Order:

Specimen type	IH Laboratory Requisition	Meditech Order Name
Nail (molecular test)	DERMATOPHYTES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dermatophyte culture <input type="checkbox"/> KOH prep (direct exam) Specimen: <input type="checkbox"/> Skin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nail <input type="checkbox"/> Hair Site: _____	"Fungus-Nail/Nail Clippings"
Hair (culture)	DERMATOPHYTES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dermatophyte culture <input type="checkbox"/> KOH prep (direct exam) Specimen: <input type="checkbox"/> Skin <input type="checkbox"/> Nail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hair Site: _____	"Fungus-Hair"
Skin (culture)	DERMATOPHYTES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dermatophyte culture <input type="checkbox"/> KOH prep (direct exam) Specimen: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Skin <input type="checkbox"/> Nail <input type="checkbox"/> Hair Site: _____	"Fungus-Skin Scrapings"

Note: Culture remains available for **nail clippings** when clinically indicated, including:

- Negative molecular test with ongoing clinical suspicion
- Treatment failure

If culture on nail clippings is required:

- write/type "Nail Fungal Culture" in the Other Tests section of the IH Laboratory requisition

e.g.

OTHER TESTS Nail Fungal Culture

or

- order **"Fungus treatment failure -Nail"** in Meditech

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Action Required

- Submit **5-10** nail clippings for suspected onychomycosis, and order for molecular testing unless culture is required as per clinical indications above
- If culture is required on nail clippings, enter “Nail Fungal Culture” in the *Other Tests* section
- Continue to submit hair and skin scrapings for culture
- refer to [Specimen Collection Instructions: Dermatophyte Testing](#) located at www.interiorhealth.ca → Information For → Medical Staff → Clinical Tools and Resources → Laboratory Services Guide → Microbiology → Specimens collection instructions for health-care providers