ANOTHER BLOODY NEWSLETTER!
June 2004

Personnel: Please welcome Julie Dodge, our new Clin Path Emergency tech. She is a certified vet tech from BelRae, and hopes to pursue grad school in the future.

Bench chemistry results: As of April 1, 2004, bench chemistry results (Urinalysis, Blood Banking, Coagulation, etc.) are available online. One copy will be placed in the Clin Path window upon completion, except for those remotely printed (Oncology, Barn, Diagnostic lab). Additional copies may be obtained from the VTH web page under “Patient Information,” like other on-line results.

Clin Path hours: Due to personnel cuts, the Clin Path Emergency Service Weekday Hours have been cut as of March 22, 2004. The Clin Path hours are:

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Weekdays
- 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Weekends
- 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Holidays

Emergency samples must be submitted at approximately 7 p.m. to be completed the same evening. Call-back hours will begin at 8 p.m., as on weekends.

Hitachi: To provide more flexibility in chemistry test ordering, we are now offering the selection of “Pick 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5” automated chemistry tests, selected from current Diagnostic Panel tests as listed on the request form. The “Pick 4” is equivalent to the current “Recheck.”

Coagulation: We are now offering D-Dimer testing. If the Qualitative (positive/negative) test is positive, a Titer (semi-quantitative) test is performed at no additional cost. Citrated, EDTA, or heparinized plasma from a clean venipuncture may be used.

CE – Urine protein dipstick vs. SSA: We currently have two methods of detecting and evaluating urine proteins. The dipstick method, using Chemstrip 9, is based on the principle of “the protein error of pH indicators”. A positive change is indicated by a color change from yellow to light green/green. False-positive results may include: highly buffered alkaline urine, infusion of blood substitute, or when the urine specimen bottle contains residues of certain disinfectants. False negative reactions may include: low to moderate amounts of Bence Jones protein, or an acidified urine specimen.

In the SSA (Sulfosalicylic Acid) Turbidometric Protein test, urine protein produces a precipitate with resultant turbidity that is approximately equal to the quantity of protein present. This is a semi-quantitative procedure, as not all types of protein form the same amount of turbidity with the same concentration of protein. This test may be positive despite a negative dipstick if Bence Jones proteins are present. False-positive reactions include: turbid urine prior to start of test, radiopaque contrast agents excreted in urine, excretion of large quantities of penicillin, cephaloridine, or sulfisoxazole, co-precipitation of crystals, and any substance precipitated by acid. False-negative reactions may include: Highly buffered alkaline urine, and inability to read results because of turbid urine.

In conclusion, do not over-interpret the dipstick or SSA protein results.

References:
Chemstrip, Boehringer Mannheim Corporation, 1996.

Respectfully submitted by Cherie Heger, Clinical Pathology, MT (ASCP)