



Letter to the editor

RSV testing in the adult; Comments on paper by Drew et al. JCV 117, 2019, pp 27-32



I was delighted when reading the paper by Drews et al. (JCV 117, 2019, pp 27–32) entitled “What is the role of rapid molecular testing for seniors and other at-risk adults with respiratory syncytial virus infections?”. It clearly shows the relevance of RSV in the adult population, while often most attention is focused on the very young for RSV infections. Historically, antigen testing was performed a lot in this young population and it was known that these antigen tests lacked sensitivity in the adult. However, the paper of Drews et al. shows that the impact of an RSV infection should not be underestimated. It also clearly indicates that testing for this virus is not performed regularly. The method of choice for testing should be based on molecular technologies, whether using so-called Laboratory Developed Tests of LDTs, or using molecular syndromic testing.

In the University Medical Center Groningen, we also observed that not only RSV but also other respiratory viruses are of importance. The impact of an parainfluenza virus infection, in particular type 3, has a huge impact in for instance lung transplant patients [1–4]. Also nosocomial infections with this virus (and other respiratory viruses) have been described [5,6]. We should not restrict ourselves for testing for only influenza and RSV because clinicians might have the opinion that we can and should only act on these two viruses. In my view, the patient being the important stakeholder, does not have the question whether he or she has an infection with influenza or RSV. The patient actually has a very simple question for the clinician. What is my problem and can you help me.

The final remark is about the use of multiplex syndromic testing and their costs. Pricing depends on reimbursement in a country and is something that must and can be negotiated. Remember that the initial list pricing for a HCV of HIV bDNA test box about two decades ago, was equal to the costs of a middle class car. And at the end, prices will go down. Substantially! Don't worry!

Author statement

I am the only author who has had the idea to write this correspondence and have done so.

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