



MEMORANDUM #113

TO: UNC Hospitals Attending Physicians, Housestaff, Nursing Coordinators,
Department Heads and Supervisors

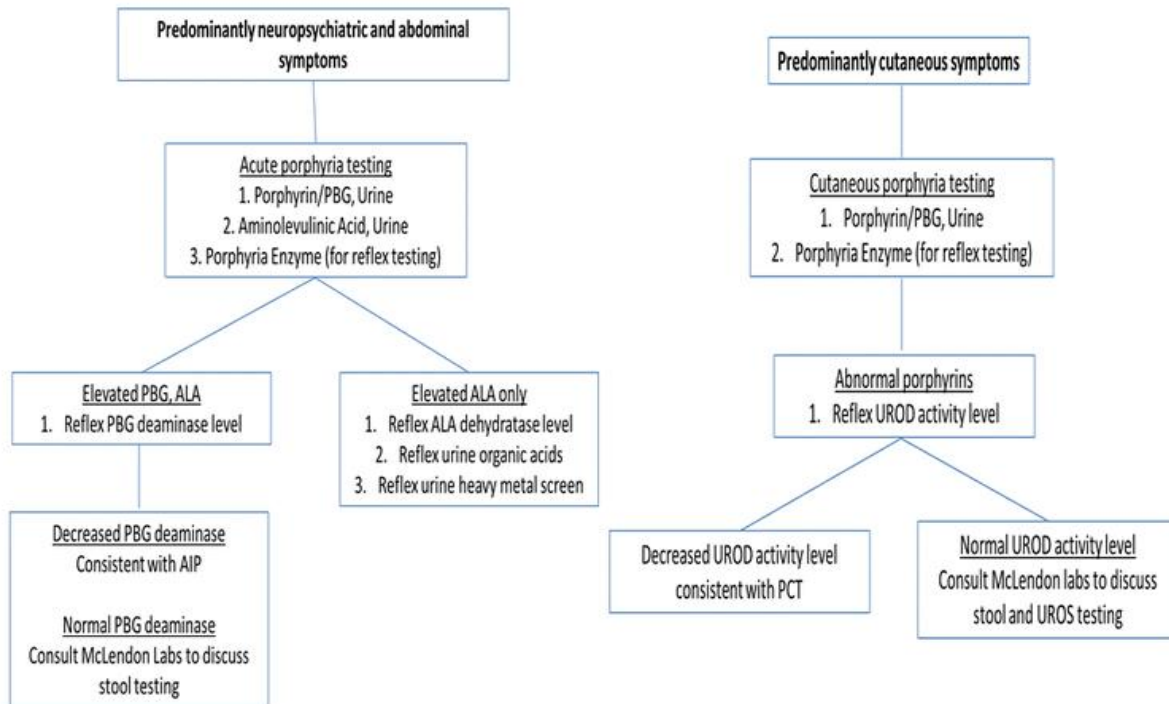
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DATE: March 20, 2013

SUBJECT: Algorithms for Evaluating Patients for the Two Most Common Forms of Porphyria

Referral Testing announces the posting and recommends the use of two algorithms when evaluating patients for the two most common forms of porphyria, i.e., acute intermittent porphyria (AIP) and porphyria cutanea tarda (PCT). The algorithms can be found at http://labs.unchealthcare.org/labstestinfo/p_tests/porphyrias_algorithm.htm.

The following two algorithms are useful in identifying the most common porphyrias:



Each begins with the collection of both a random urine sample and a green-top heparin tube (that should be placed on ice). The urine will be sent immediately to Mayo Medical Laboratories to begin testing (for AIP this will include porphyrin, PBG, and aminolevulinic acid; for PCT porphyrin and PBG will be done), while the whole blood sample will be retained until the initial urine-based results indicate a need for enzyme testing.

Following the protocol has the potential of reducing costs, minimizing turn-around time, avoiding 24-h urine collections, and having the appropriate sample for confirmatory testing. Remember, this assumes the patient is symptomatic when samples are collected. Additional testing will be necessary for those patients who have a rarer porphyrias.

The orderable tests are listed below. http://labs.unchealthcare.org/labstestinfo/p_tests/porphyria_wrkup.htm

Acute Porphyria Testing

1. Porphyrin/PBG, Urine
2. Aminolevulinic Acid, Urine
3. Porphyria Enzyme (collected on ice, for reflex enzyme testing)

Cutaneous Porphyria Testing

1. Porphyrin/PBG, Urine
2. Porphyria Enzyme (collected on ice, for reflex enzyme testing)

Again, the algorithms are designed for these more common types of porphyrias. Please contact Referral Testing (919-966-2362) should you suspect your patient to have one of the rarer forms or should you have any questions.