



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AusDiagnostics product tests for five STIs including *Mycoplasma genitalium*

A relatively unknown STI, which is causing concern among doctors and health professionals around the world, can be tested by AusDiagnostics – Australia’s leading commercial supplier of highly multiplexed diagnostics to microbiology laboratories.

Mycoplasma genitalium (MG), which was identified as a bacteria in the 1980s, is spread through unprotected intercourse and is now becoming resistant to antibiotics.

MG can present similar symptoms to Chlamydia, which is the most common STI in Australia, including a burning sensation when urinating and pain or bleeding during and after intercourse. Males may experience watery discharge from their penis.

However, many patients are asymptomatic and don’t know they’re infected.

If left untreated, MG can cause cervicitis and pelvic inflammatory disease, leading to infertility.

The colonisation of Mycoplasmas is also associated with an increased risk of developing pregnancy complications.

AusDiagnostics Managing Director, Professor Keith Stanley, said it’s important for doctors to test for a range of STIs to ensure that patients are treated for infections as early as possible.

“Most laboratories routinely test for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea, the two most pathogenic STIs, however *Mycoplasma*, *Trichomonas* and *Ureaplasma* are also STI infections which can have health implications,” he said.

“AusDiagnostics currently sells a molecular test kit for all five STIs and is adding the common resistance genes found in *Mycoplasma* and *Gonorrhoea* in a new kit being validated at a hospital in Melbourne.”

In a study performed at a hospital in Australia, samples that had previously been analysed for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea were re-analysed on the AusDiagnostics test kit.

Three out of 72 were found to contain *Mycoplasma genitalium* and seven contained *Ureaplasma urealyticum*. This means that the traditional testing missed 14 per cent of the STIs.

Although the jury is still out on the severity of *Ureaplasma* in STI infections, this is still useful information for the treating doctor.

In another study, four *Trichomonas* positives were found in 200 samples that had previously been declared free of STIs using tests that only measured Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea.

"The advantage of a multiplex approach is that all the STI organisms and their resistance can be measured at one time from one sample instead of having to request a second test for resistance once a positive is found," said Professor Stanley.

"This simplifies the laboratory work flow and reduces the chance of missing an important infection."

About AusDiagnostics:

AusDiagnostics registered as an Australian company in 2006 and now employs about 50 staff across four countries. Its proprietary technology, "Multiplexed Tandem PCR", was patented in 2005 following a START grant from the Australian government to Corbett Research Pty Ltd. MT-PCR allows multiplexing any number of gene targets and can detect minor pathogens even in the presence of a large abundance of other pathogens. This makes it very useful for dual or multiple infections.

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