

Client Communication

# Manual WBC Differentials

Pathology Laboratories, Inc. (PathLabs) is committed to providing effective, appropriate, and timely patient care by ensuring that our testing reflects medical standards and current guidance. In an audit of our hematology processes, we identified a quality improvement opportunity concerning ordering, resource utilization, and timeliness for Unit Code 6100, MANUAL DIFFERENTIAL. This Unit Code requires a manual WBC differential on a CBC, even if not indicated for qualitative or quantitative abnormalities identified by analyzer expert systems or department procedures. WBC differentials, performed by automated instrumentation at PathLabs, offer higher precision, improved clinical sensitivity, and superior turnaround time in distinguishing normal from abnormal samples when compared to manual testing.

**Effective December 18, 2023, Unit Code 6100, MANUAL DIFFERENTIAL will be removed from our test directory. To obtain an automated differential with the complete blood count (CBC), Unit Code 5000, CBC WITH AUTOMATED DIFFERENTIAL should be ordered.** The hematology lab will perform and report an automated WBC differential, unless automated flagging or procedure determine that a manual differential is required. When the data identifies an abnormality requiring a smear review, a manual differential will be performed and any morphologic abnormalities will be reported. If the findings meet laboratory established criteria for pathologist review, the slide will be reviewed by a pathologist. This change will improve timely reporting of complete and essential hematology data.

The following chart summarizes changes discussed herein:

Order Code	Current Test	Current CPT	Comment
6100	MANUAL DIFFERENTIAL	85007	Removed from directory - December 18, 2023
Order Code	Current Test	Current CPT	Comment
5000	CBC WITH AUTOMATED DIFFERENTIAL	85025	Replacement test - December 18, 2023

**References:**

1. Pierre RV. Peripheral blood film review. Clin Lab Med. 2002; 22(1):279-297.
2. M. E. Kurt-Mangold et al. Clinical Utility of Ordered Pathology Blood Smear Reviews. Clin. Lab. 2018; 64.
3. B. Bain Diagnosis from Blood Smear N Engl J Med 2005; 353:498-507

## Client Communication

Our online test directory will be updated to reflect this information on December 18, 2023.

This Client Communication has also been posted to our website for reference.

Please review the information and make changes as applicable to your practice/facility. If you have any questions, please contact our Client Service Department at 419.255.4601 / 800.281.8804 or your account executive. Thank you.

**NOTE:** CPT codes are provided for information only, and are based on Pathology Laboratories' current understanding of Medicare rules and carrier instructions and in accordance with the current issue of physicians' current procedural terminology (CPT), published by the American Medical Association. Medicare coding may differ from coding used by other third party payers. Questions regarding coding should be confirmed with the payer being billed. Pathology Laboratories cannot accept responsibility for the reimbursement clients may or may not receive based on the procedure codes provided.