

17 March 2020

Dear ACTG Laboratories:

Due to the rapidly evolving travel restrictions associated with the coronavirus (COVID-19), the ACTG Network is requesting that all specimens be held within your institution until further notice. Frozen PBMCs should be placed in liquid nitrogen locally. If you do not have access to liquid nitrogen, please contact the LC as soon as possible. Specimens are not to be shipped to either BRI or end user testing laboratories due to concerns about the ability of carriers to maintain and / or deliver shipments. The ACTG Network understands that this may be a challenge for some of the institutions and laboratories that are affiliated with our Network, but it was determined that this was the most prudent method of ensuring the overall integrity of our specimens while meeting the research objectives being set by our protocol teams and leadership. The ACTG Leadership and the Laboratory Center appreciate all of your efforts to ensure continuity of our research projects as well as your flexibility in this situation.

Please continue your diligent efforts to maintain specimen integrity (i.e., temperature monitoring, chain of custody and tracking of specimens within LDMS). In addition, it will be important to document all circumstances surrounding these deviations from our normal practices. These records should be maintained in accordance with your national and local regulations as well as the DAIDS Policy on Storage and Retention of Clinical Research Records (DWD-POL-CL-006.02).

If you have questions or concerns please reach out to the ACTG Laboratory Center at ACTG.labcenter@fstrf.org. Beginning March 18, 2020 please send emails concerning storage or shipment issues to COVID.labissues@fstrf.org, rather than ACTG.labcenter@fstrf.org so that they can be prioritized.

Best,

ACTG Laboratory Center