January 28, 2020

Human Coronaviruses (CoV) were established as respiratory pathogens in the 1960s and six serological variants associated with human disease had been characterized prior to the emergence of a new novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) that is of current global concern. These viruses are most commonly associated with upper respiratory tract infections; however, they have also been detected in individuals with lower respiratory tract infections.[7–9] Coronaviruses have been associated with croup and exacerbation of asthma.[7,10] Coronavirus infection occurs more often in the winter and there appears to be a periodicity of epidemics for some strains.[8] Coronavirus infections (with the exception of SARS, MERS-CoV, and possibly 2019-nCoV) are generally self-limiting.

The **Respiratory Panel by PCR (RPPCR)** and **Pneumonia Panel by PCR plus Bacterial Culture (PNARC)** performed at NPL can detect the four common coronaviruses: **229E**, **OC43**, **HKU1**, and **NL63**. These are reported as a "Detected" result for Coronavirus. Our panels **cannot** detect Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (SARS-CoV), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV, and the novel 2019-nCoV. Currently, in the United States, only the CDC has testing that is able to detect this new novel strain of coronavirus. Please refer to Health Alerts provided by your Public Health Lab and the CDC for any questions pertaining to this novel coronavirus.

If you have any further questions, please contact NPL at 701-530-5700 or 1-800-645-1003.