



January 15, 2025

Re: Peripheral Blood Smear Orders

Dear Healthcare Provider,

The standard CBC process, using Soft code CBC3, uses well-established criteria to ensure that a manual differential and pathology review are performed when needed. In most scenarios, ordering a manual differential (CBCMN) and provider ordered pathology review (PREVW) are unnecessary. Please refrain from ordering a manual differential or automatic pathology review except in rare, clinically relevant circumstances. See below for additional information.

The standard CBC includes an automated differential performed by modern analyzers that count thousands of cells, typically greater than 8,000 and up to 50,000 in certain scenarios. When established criteria are met, the blood smear is reviewed by a highly trained laboratory technologist.

The standard CBC (CBC3) is preferred because it reduces time the trained technologists spend on normal blood smears for which the automated differential is suited and allows technologists more time to devote to abnormal peripheral blood smears and other patient testing responsibilities.

When a Pathology Review (PREVW) order is placed by the provider, a pathologist will review the smear regardless of what is seen on the peripheral smear. Due to this ordering practice, many normal peripheral smears are unnecessarily reviewed. Those that are abnormal will automatically be reflexed for a pathologist to review them if the established criteria are met. Rare scenarios may be appropriate for ordering a pathology review prior to a CBC being performed such as a clinical suspicion of TTP with a documented thrombocytopenia.

In summary, the standard CBC process uses well-established criteria to ensure that a manual differential and pathology review are performed when needed, making the ordering of them unnecessary in most scenarios; **a standard, automated CBC is routinely all that is needed.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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