**SERUM BASED HCV TESTING**

**Quest Lab Test # 8472 (Hepatitis C Antibody with Reflex to HCV RNA QN PCR)** is a blood test done by venipuncture which will detect antibodies and then, if needed, reflex directly to RNA testing to check for a viral load. Test #8472 is the code for the test. This test confirms that a patient/consumer is or isn't infected with HCV.

**Procedure for Obtaining and Preparing the Specimen for Transport to Quest**

**The blood specimen should be drawn using the Serum Separator Tube (SST) sent by Quest. Typically, the tube will be a red and yellow top tube with a separator solution in the bottom. The lab supply code at Quest is T157.**

Special Note: Try to fill the SST as full as possible without causing the patient/consumer undue pain. The rationale for filling the tube is to have at least (4) ml of serum once the blood is spun. Insufficient serum will result in a failed test. The minimum amount of serum to run test #8472 is (3) ml.

Once the blood has been drawn, invert the tube gently no more than eight times. Further inversion may cause alterations in sample integrity. Allow the specimen to clot in an upright position for at least 30 minutes, but not longer than 1 hour before centrifugation. Centrifuge for at least 15 minutes within one hour of collection. Be careful to place the same color tube with water in it opposite the specimen tube to allow for a nice balance of the two tubes while being centrifuged. The water in the one tube and blood in the second tube should match in height. Accidents have occurred when a “balancing tube” is not used. To prevent a potentially hazardous situation always use the “balancing tube” for safety reasons.

SPECIAL COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS: If necessary, freshly drawn specimens (whole blood) may be stored at 2-25 degrees(C)/36-77(F) for up to 24 hours prior to centrifugation. Remember to separate plasma or serum form cells within 24 hours of collection by centrifugation.

Place the lab order in the Quest Quanum online system (formally Care360), and print one to accompany the specimen to the lab. Properly label the vial with consumer name and birthdate. The specimen and requisition should be placed in a specimen bag for transportation to Quest, but can be sent at room temperature. It is advisable to call Quest to ascertain if the driver picking up the specimen wishes you to place the specimen in cold packs, provided by Quest, during the summer months as it can become very hot in the lock box at your site where the lab is stored for Quest pickup.

Call Quest at 866-MYQUEST (1-866-697-8378) and request Quest to pick-up the specimen. Your call will be received by an automated system that will ask you the rationale for your call. You will need to state you are requesting a lab pick up. Once you are directed to the service providing lab pickups, and have requested a pickup, place the specimen in the Quest lock box attached to the door at your facility.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR TEST # 8472: Once the specimen has been spun and serum/plasma separated, it is stable at room temperature for 72 hours, refrigerated for 14 days and frozen for 30 days.

**QUEST LAB #35645 HCV RNA QN PCR**

When the OraQuick HCV Rapid Antibody Test is reactive, the presence of HCV antibodies is detected and must be followed up with lab test # 35645 which provides an HCV RNA QN PCR, a confirmatory test to see if the patient/consumer cleared the virus, or has a viral load. Patients/consumers with HCV antibodies and a positive RNA are considered to have hepatitis C and need to be referred for treatment.

The instuctions for drawing the sample are the same as those noted for #8472 **except for two steps listed below.**

**1. Only (3) ml of serum is needed**

**2. The specimen needs to be kept cold, not stored and transported at room temperature.**