

DATE: March 3, 2004

TO: AACTG Main Unit Principal Investigators and Study Coordinators
AACTG Laboratory Technologists

FROM: Constance A. Benson, M.D., AACTG Executive Committee Chair
William G. Powderly, M.D., AACTG Executive Committee Vice-Chair

SUBJ: Storage of Specimens Collected in AACTG Protocols Less than ACTG 300

As many of you are aware, there have been discussions over the past several months with the protocol teams, Research Agenda Committees, and the Scientific Agenda Steering Committee (SASC) about what to do with AACTG samples collected in older protocols and stored in freezers at the sites. The SASC has completed a review of AACTG protocols numbered less than ACTG 300 and concluded that sites may dispense with samples collected in those protocols (with the exception of ACTG 163, ACTG 286, and ACTG 291 as noted below) since all specimen analyses planned per the protocols have been completed. Protocol chairs, other team members, and site investigators who wish to make use of those samples may do so but the AACTG will no longer support the storage, shipment, and/or analysis of the specimens and sites will no longer have linkages to the AACTG database for these specimens. The AACTG Executive Committee (AEC) concurred with the SASC that specimens collected in AACTG protocols numbered less than ACTG 300 will revert to the responsibility of the sites to be either discarded or saved at the site's own expense and maintained according to local IRB policies and procedures. Please note that this decision is NOT applicable to Pediatric ACTG protocols numbered less than ACTG 300.

TIMEFRAME:

Sites that do not plan to store samples at their own expense may begin discarding specimens in all AACTG protocols numbered less than ACTG 300 effective March 15, 2004, with the exception of specimens from protocols **ACTG 163, ACTG 286, and ACTG 291**. The protocol chairs for these studies have indicated a desire to retain specimens that are currently stored at other sites. The protocol chairs must contact the Data Management Center in writing by Friday, April 2, 2004 to make arrangements for the specimens to be located and shipped to a protocol team member. The protocol team will be responsible for the incurred shipping costs and future storage costs and will not have access to the AACTG database for these specimens. Further direction will be provided to sites about those studies at a future time.

LOGISTICS:

It is important once AACTG specimens have physically been discarded that the site's local Laboratory Data Management System (LDMS) database be updated to reflect these changes. From the reports module, run the "storage detail report" and search by the study of interest. This report will list all the aliquots for the selected study along with their location (freezer, rack, box, coordinates). Select the specific aliquot and permanently delete it from the STORAGE Module.

If you would like to perform this operation on a large group of specimens, please contact LDMS User Support for assistance.

We thank the protocol teams, the RACs, the SASC, and the sites for their assistance in this effort.

Cc: Complications of HIV Disease RAC Members
Executive Committee Members
HIV Disease RAC Members
Immunology RAC Members
Scientific Agenda Steering Committee Members
Protocol Chairs for AACTG Protocols Numbered Less Than ACTG 300