**Seattle Children’s Hospital MGL Hold & DNA Bank Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

Background:

This document is intended to provide guidance on the steps involved in requesting a Molecular Genetics Lab (MGL) Hold and details regarding DNA bank changes. As of 9/1/2020, Seattle Children’s Laboratory discontinued accepting new samples for the SCH DNA bank. This change was necessary to comply with evolving coding and billing regulations. As of 12/30/2023, PreventionGenetics also discontinued accepting new samples for their DNA bank.

Alternate sample types (such as saliva or buccal samples) and Molecular Genetics Lab (MGL) hold can often be used instead for complex testing and help support test coordination for families who live at a distance. DNA bank orders will be limited to SCH patients with an anticipated need for postmortem molecular genetic tests or those with extenuating circumstances noted in the criteria below. These orders will be reviewed as part of our Laboratory Stewardship Program.

# Is DNA banking still an option?

DNA banking at SCH and PreventionGenetics laboratory is no longer an option. As of 6/30/24, we have not identified an alternate DNA banking service for new specimens. Once we have identified an alternate DNA banking service, then it can be utilized in the select circumstances defined in the “Comparison of MGL Hold and DNA Banking” table below in this document. Families may also have the option of working directly with the alternate DNA banking service, if desired.

# How does this change affect patients who already have DNA banked?

This policy will not affect patients who have DNA stored in the SCH DNA bank prior to 9/1/2020: these samples will continue to be stored at Seattle Children’s for a minimum of 10 years from their respective order date, or until the sample is depleted.

This policy will not affect patients who have DNA stored in the PreventionGenetics DNA bank prior to 12/30/2023: these samples will continue to be stored at PreventionGenetics per PreventionGenetics’ contracts (generally for a minimum of 40 years from their respective order date, or until the sample is depleted. Refer to PreventionGenetics’ website for additional information).

# Comparison of MGL Hold and DNA Banking

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|  | **MGL Hold** | **DNA Banking Send out Test** |
| **Criteria** | • One specific clinical molecular test is planned, *and*   * An alternate specimen collection (e.g., saliva, buccal) is not an option for the requested test, *and* * It is a significant hardship to defer sample collection until insurance preauthorization can be obtained (e.g., family cannot return to a SCH lab for phlebotomy in necessary timeframe after preauthorization obtained (see Lab Test Catalog <https://seattlechildrenslab.testcatalog.org/> for all locations and extended/weekend hours!), *and*   • DNA banking criteria are not met. | * SCH patients who are in the perimortem period; or * SCH patients who will have compromised ability to have medically necessary germline molecular genetic blood tests; or * Patients with SCH Pathology services for autopsy, fetal pathology, or products of conception; or * DNA banking requests for cells cultured at SCH cytogenetics laboratory, ordered by an SCH provider |
| **Charge** | No additional patient charge (but uses clinical and lab resources) | To be determined once a DNA banking service has been identified. The charge will be paid by patient directly to the service. |
| **Consent Required** | Verbal agreement from patient/guardian | Signed DNA Bank form is typically required. |

# Questions to consider BEFORE ordering an MGL hold:

Pause. Before telling a family that an MGL hold will be performed, consider the below options:

* Is one specific clinical molecular test recommended? (MGL hold is not to be used when test plan is uncertain!)
* Are you certain that the desired test can be performed on extracted DNA? Some tests cannot be performed on extracted DNA. Consult the [Lab Test Catalog](https://seattlechildrenslab.testcatalog.org/) or the Lab Genetic Counselors first if you are not certain.
* Does this patient:
  + already have banked DNA?
  + have another appointment at a SCH facility in the near future?
  + live near one of the SCH Lab sites (see the Lab Test Catalog for all locations and extended/weekend hours!)
* Can a saliva or other sample be collected at home later?
  + For inhouse tests see the [Lab Test Catalog](https://seattlechildrenslab.testcatalog.org/) test page.
  + For sendout tests see the Alternate Specimen Collection Kits for Genetic Testing page <https://seattlechildrenslab.testcatalog.org/show/2326274048> or contact Lab Genetic Counselors (LabGC@seattlechildrens.org).

# Is consent required for an MGL hold?

MGL Hold does not require a signed consent form because it is a short-term extract and hold that is intended for one test.

# How does a provider order an MGL Hold?

Within the patient’s Epic Chart, navigate to the **Orders** function and search for Molecular Genetics Lab Hold (a.k.a., MGL). You must specify the one test you intend to order within the **“Hold for test” field** and include any additional information in the **Comments** field. “Genetic testing” and “To be determined” are not valid responses in these fields. Orders will be reviewed for appropriateness by the Lab GC team, based on criteria.



# A screenshot of a computer Description automatically generated

One specific test must be indicated here.

# How long will you store the DNA if an MGL hold is ordered?

MGL Hold samples will be held for 1 year and will automatically be discarded, without additional notification, if not used before then. MGL Hold orders will continue to be limited to SCH patients with extenuating circumstances noted in the criteria above.

# Why are samples being held for 1 year?

Insurance preauthorizations are complex, and we know that the coordination once preauth is complete is complex. We established this timeframe to prevent the need to request extensions and ensure the sample is available as intended – however, in all likelihood, samples will be used much earlier. A 1 year timeframe also makes it easier for providers/staff to assess if a collected sample is still available (provided testing hasn’t been completed) – 1 year is a nice round number!

# How can a provider determine if an MGL hold has been ordered?

MGL hold orders placed in Epic are visible within the Lab tab.

# How does a provider use an MGL hold sample for testing?

Once preauthorization has been obtained and there is confirmation of the testing plan, refer to the PolicyStat Job Aid: Genetic Test Coordination at Seattle Children’s for steps to order a test using an MGL hold sample or banked DNA.

# What is the cost of an MGL hold?

There is no additional charge to the patient for this MGL Hold process, but it does use additional clinical team and lab team resources to do this.

# Can MGL hold be utilized by researchers, who have previously used DNA banking?

No. MGL holds will be restricted to clinical use only, for one specific clinical genetic test.

# Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

LabGC team –[LabGC@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:LabGC@seattlechildrens.org) or Lab Client Services – [labclientservices@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:labclientservices@seattlechildrens.org) / 987-2617