

Avian Leukosis Virus (ALV) – Antigen Test

ABOUT: Avian Leukosis Virus (ALV) is a retrovirus of chickens that causes a variety of tumors and immunosuppression. It spreads both vertically (from hen to chick) and horizontally within flocks. Detecting ALV antigens helps identify active infections.

SYMPTOMS: Clinical signs vary and may include reduced growth, poor egg production, weakness, or the development of tumors in organs such as the liver and spleen. Some infections remain subclinical but reduce productivity.

PREVENTION: Prevention relies on maintaining ALV-free breeder flocks, strict biosecurity, and culling of positive birds. There are no effective vaccines, so testing and flock management are key to control.

GETTING TESTED: Blood samples from poultry can be tested for ALV antigen. Collect at least 0.5 mL of blood in a red- or yellow-top tube. Samples should be refrigerated after collection and shipped with an ice pack.

Tests are processed on Monday, and results are reported the same day.

