TEST: RHEUMATOID FACTOR (RF)

PRINCIPLE:
Rheumatoid Factors are antibodies that react with the individual's own immunoglobulin. The antibodies are usually directed against the Fc region of the IgG molecule. Rheumatoid Factor can be detected in the serum of the majority of patients with rheumatoid arthritis and is important for the diagnosis and prognosis of those patients with higher concentrations. These patients tend to suffer a more severe form of the illness and develop extra-joint complications more readily. Rheumatoid factors are not disease specific and can occur in lower frequencies in several other autoimmune disorders, chronic inflammation and normal individuals.

SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS:
2 ml serum collected in a red top tube with no additive or in a serum separator tube (gel barrier). Serum may be separated from the clot. If serum samples are not assayed within 6 hours, samples should be stored at +2°C to +8°C. If serum samples are not assayed within 24 hours, they should be stored frozen at -15°C to -20°C. Frozen samples should be thawed only once. Analyte deterioration may occur in samples that are repeatedly frozen and thawed.

METHOD: Rate Nephelometry

REFERENCES:
1. Johnson, P. M., Faulk, W. P., "Rheumatoid Factor: Its Nature, Specificity and Production in Rheumatoid Arthritis", Clin. Immunol. Immunopathol., 6:414 440 (1976).
2. Zrein M., De Marcillac, G., Van Regenmortel M. H. V., "Quantitation of Rheumatoid Factor by Enzyme Immunoassay Using Biotinylated IgG", J. Immunol. Methods, 87:229 237 (1986).
3. Tietz, N. W., "Specimen Collection and Processing; Sources of Biological Variation", Textbook of Clinical Chemistry, pp 478 518, W. B. Saunders, Philadelphia, PA (1986).

Normal Range: **< 20**

Turnaround Time: One Week