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Information Update on Specimen Submission and Testing for Influenza  
Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)  
Division of Laboratories

IDPH laboratories provide influenza testing in support of the Department's surveillance activities. Resources have been made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing specimens for selected patients to track seasonal influenza strains and novel influenza strains.

Objectives of the surveillance are:

- Determination of circulating influenza viruses for the purpose of yearly vaccine strain recommendations.
- Detecting genetic drift and/or shift in influenza strains and early detection of novel influenza viruses with pandemic potential.
- Detecting and monitoring antiviral resistance.

At this time, IDPH laboratories are testing respiratory specimens from individuals with acute febrile respiratory illness who are hospitalized, recently deceased, and certain individuals of interest to Local Health Department investigations. Acceptable specimen criteria may change. Refer to internet site [http://www.idph.state.il.us/h1n1\\_flu/index.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/h1n1_flu/index.htm) (Link "Health Care Providers") for current information on specimen acceptance criteria, collection, and submission forms. Patient specimens for influenza testing that do not meet acceptance criteria must be sent to a private laboratory. A list of private laboratories offering PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing is attached and also available at the above link.

Hospitals (for inpatient testing only), coroners and medical examiners, and Local Health Departments may obtain specimen collection kits, shipping instructions and submission forms by contacting the IDPH Springfield laboratory Shipping Unit by phone (217) 524-6222, by fax at (217) 524-7924, or by emailing [DPH.LabImprovement@Illinois.gov](mailto:DPH.LabImprovement@Illinois.gov). All submitters will be responsible for packaging and shipping their specimens to IDPH Laboratories.

Specimens meeting submission criteria may be sent to the IDPH Springfield laboratory (217-782-6562), the IDPH Chicago laboratory (312-793-4760), or the IDPH Carbondale laboratory (618-457-5131). Specimens not meeting the criteria for public health testing will be deemed unacceptable. A report will be issued stating that the specimen is unacceptable for testing.

Questions on IDPH laboratory testing may be directed to Bernard (Tom) Johnson, Chief, Division of Laboratories, at (217) 782-6562 or [Bernard.Johnson@Illinois.gov](mailto:Bernard.Johnson@Illinois.gov).

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## Laboratories Offering Influenza PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Testing

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Points of contact to arrange a billing account, specimen shipping, etc., for influenza PCR testing are listed below. Testing protocols vary by laboratory (e.g., not every lab performs sub-typing). Laboratories are listed in alphabetical order; IDPH does not endorse any particular laboratory. This list may be incomplete; it is based on available information as of the above date and will be updated periodically. To add the name of a laboratory to this list, please contact Bernard Johnson at [Bernard.Johnson@Illinois.gov](mailto:Bernard.Johnson@Illinois.gov) or at (217) 782-6562.

Laboratory	Contact	Phone Number
ACL Laboratories	Client Services	800-877-7016
Alverno Clinical Laboratories, LLC	Jennifer Skeen, PhD	800-937-5521
Marshfield Labs	Sandra Molter	800-222-5835, x16278
Mayo Medical Laboratories	Customer Service	800-533-1710
North Shore University Health System	Brian Staes	847-663-2105
Northwestern Memorial Hospital	Marcia Anderson	312-926-4296
Quest Diagnostics	Customer Service	866-697-8378
University of Illinois	Jessica Badilla	312-996-4800