



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Advisory

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RECIPIENTS: Physicians (Family and General Practice, Pediatrics, and Internal Medicine), and Hospitals (Admin & ED & InfCtl)– Statewide

DATE: May 05, 2009

SUBJECT: *INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR SWINE INFLUENZA A H1N1 TESTING AND COLLECTION*

Dear Colleagues,

The Mississippi State Department of Health is continuing surveillance activities to detect cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) infection in Mississippi. The following interim guidelines provide the clinical criteria for submission of respiratory samples to the Public Health Laboratory for PCR influenza testing. The testing done is for surveillance purposes only. **Please note that emphasis is placed on testing patients who present with an influenza-like illness, defined as fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ and cough and/or sore throat.** Please consult the MSDH website for updates to these guidelines at www.healthyms.com.

INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR SWINE INFLUENZA A H1N1 TESTING AND COLLECTION

Updated May 5, 2009

Contact your local Public Health District **BEFORE** collection of a specimen Monday –Friday 8:00-5:00pm. (After hours, weekends and holidays call 601-576-7725 or 1-800-556-0003). These are interim guidelines; please consult the Mississippi State Department of Health website for updates at www.healthyms.com.

I. CLINICAL CRITERIA

Submit samples from patients who meet the following clinical criteria:*

Patient has influenza-like illness:

Fever $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100°F) and
cough and/or sore throat

AND meets one of the following criteria:

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1. Resides in a community with confirmed human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection, *OR*
2. Onset of illness within 7 days of travel to a community either within the U.S. or internationally where there are confirmed cases, *OR*
3. Onset of illness within 7 days of contact with persons who had a febrile respiratory illness who were in international or U.S. areas with confirmed cases, *OR*
4. Any patient admitted to the hospital with the above symptoms of influenza-like illness, if not previously tested

*If your clinic or facility is one of the 46 statewide influenza-like illness surveillance provider sites, please continue to collect and submit influenza PCR samples to the Public Health Laboratory for testing on any patient who meets the clinical definition for **ILI regardless of travel or contact history**.

II. SPECIMEN TYPE

Upper respiratory specimen types that may be collected:

1. Preferred methods are nasopharyngeal swab/aspirate or nasal wash/aspirate.
2. If not available a combined nasal swab and oropharyngeal swab.

III. SPECIMEN COLLECTION *(MSDH only provides testing supplies to the participating ILI surveillance providers.)*

Ideally, swab specimens should be collected using swabs with a synthetic tip (e.g., polyester or Dacron®) and an aluminum or plastic shaft. Swabs with cotton tips and wooden shafts are not recommended. Specimens collected with swabs made of calcium alginate are not acceptable. The swab specimen collection vials should contain 3ml of viral transport medium (e.g., containing, protein stabilizer, antibiotics to discourage bacterial and fungal growth, and buffer solution).

IV. SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

Refrigerate the specimen at 4°C and contact the Mississippi State Department of Health Public Health District during regular working hours or 601-576-7400 after hours and on weekends to facilitate transport of the sample to the PHL. **For shipping, use cold packs to keep the sample at 4°C.**

Complete a MSDH Influenza Form 930 for each specimen with the following information: patient's name, age, date of onset of illness, type of specimen, date collected, travel/ exposure history, and clinical symptoms.

CDC's website may be consulted for specimen collection for swine influenza at www.cdc.gov/swineflu/.

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