

# Specimen Collection and Submission Instructions

## Influenza RT-PCR, Diagnostic (Version 1)

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| Specimen Type              | Collection Time   | Collection Frequency   | Collection Procedures  | Transport Media             | Shipping & Handling (S&H)**  |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Naso-pharyngeal (NP)*      | At illness.<br><br>For optimal isolation, collect within 72 hours of symptom onset. | NA   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect only using synthetic tip swabs (ex. Dacron, Nylon, Polyester) with non-wooden shaft.</li> <li>Immediately after collection, place swab directly in 2-3 ml of Viral Transport Media (VTM).</li> <li><b>Minimum volume:</b> 2 ml of VTM.</li> </ul> | Viral Transport Media (VTM) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Transport device:</b> Sterile leak-proof container with VTM.</li> <li><b>Rejection Criteria:</b> Not transported in VTM. Swab on wooden shaft.</li> <li><b>Transport:</b> Refrigerate and ship to arrive at WAPHL during business hours within 72 hrs of collection. Ship cold (2 - 8°C) on ice packs. If previously frozen, ship on dry ice. Ship as Category B.</li> <li><b>Storage:</b> Refrigerate. If arriving at WAPHL after 72 hrs of collection, freeze at ≤ -70°C.</li> </ul> |
| Throat (THR)               |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Dual NP/THR*               |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Nasal swabs                |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Nasal aspirate or wash*    |   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect in sterile container (see transport device) into a sterile vial with 2–3 ml of Viral Transport Media (VTM).</li> <li><b>Minimum volume:</b> 1 ml of sample plus VTM.</li> </ul>   |                             |  |
| Tracheal aspirate          |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Bronchial lavage (BAL)     |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Bronchial aspirate or wash |   |  |  |                             |  |
| Sputum                     | NA  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect and place in VTM.</li> <li><b>Minimum volume:</b> 2 ml of VTM.</li> </ul> |  |                             |  |
| Lung tissue                |   |  |  |                             |  |

(Additional Specimen Type on page 2)

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| Specimen Type | Collection Time | Collection Frequency | Collection Procedures | Transport Media | Shipping & Handling (S&H)**   |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---|
| Viral culture | NA              | NA                   | Isolate from culture. | VTM             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transport device:</b> Sterile leak-proof container with VTM.</li> <li>• <b>Transport:</b> Refrigerate and ship cold (2 - 8°C) on ice packs. If previously frozen, ship on dry ice.<br/>Ship as Category B.</li> <li>• <b>Storage:</b> Refrigerate. If arriving at WAPHL after 72 hrs of shipping, freeze at ≤ -70°C.</li> </ul> |

**General Rejection Criteria (for additional details, see S&H)**

- Unaccepted specimen type.
- Not refrigerated or frozen properly.
- Insufficient specimen volume.
- Leaky specimen.
- Did not obtain CDE approval.
- Failure to follow specific S&H requirements.

**NOTE:**

Specimens will not be processed until ALL of the following information are provided on requisition form:

- Patient name, patient's county of residence, second identifier, and date of onset.
- Two matching identifiers on both the tube and the laboratory requisition form.
- Specimen type, date of collection, and test requested.
- Submitter name, address, and telephone/FAX numbers.
- Reason for testing at WAPHL.

**Collection kit availability**

Not available. If you are an ILI-Net Provider, please see “Influenza RT-PCR, Surveillance”

**Comments**

- For patients with severe lower respiratory tract disease, a lower respiratory tract specimen (e.g., BAL or tracheal aspirate) should be collected in addition to an upper respiratory tract specimen (e.g., NP/THR swab, nasal aspirate or wash).
- The preferred specimen type for detection of H5N1 virus is a throat swab.
- For medical examiners, please see: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/mefluguide.pdf>