



**Submission protocol for providers: Influenza surveillance**

**Date: 2/6/2020**

For surveillance purposes, local hospitals and clinics are encouraged to submit selected specimens that test positive for influenza A or influenza B to a local public health laboratory. The laboratory will then perform additional testing to subtype the influenza virus. In turn, specimens will be forwarded to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) for confirmation and antiviral resistance testing. Together, these surveillance efforts aid in detecting novel influenza viruses for effective intervention and control measures, in determining where and when influenza activity is occurring, and in selecting vaccine strains.

Submission instructions are as follows:

1. The hospital or clinic must be located in Napa, Solano, Yolo, or Marin county.
2. The preferred specimen is a nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal sample collected with a dacron-tipped swab and placed in 2–3 mL of viral transport medium.
3. Please limit submissions to **4 influenza-positive** specimens per week and include at least **1 flu A+** specimen and **1 flu B+** specimen if both influenza types are circulating. A suggested approach for choosing the specimens is as follows:
  - a. When  $\leq 4$  positive specimens are detected during the week, send all specimens.
  - b. When  $> 4$  positive specimens are detected during the week, then:
    - i. If the 4 most recent specimens from the past week include at least one flu A+ and one flu B+, send those 4 most recent specimens.
    - ii. If the 4 most recent specimens are the same influenza type (e.g., A), send the 3 most recent specimens of that type (e.g., A) and a recent specimen of the other type (e.g., B).
  - c. The goal is to maintain random sampling while simplifying specimen choice.
4. A laboratory requisition, with all required fields completed, must accompany the specimen, and be placed in the side pouch of the specimen bag.
  - a. For "Tests requested", specify: Influenza A subtyping or Influenza B subtyping
  - b. Under comments, specify the severity of the case (e.g., fatal case, patient required hospitalization, outbreak, outpatient, etc.) as well as whether the patient received seasonal influenza vaccination  $\geq 14$  days prior to symptoms
5. Once specimens are ready for pickup, contact the laboratory at (707) 784-4410. A pickup will usually be scheduled within one business day.

Subtyping results are usually faxed within 1 week of specimen receipt. Please note that if the specimen was not previously tested for influenza, a fee will be incurred for initial influenza testing. By contrast, subtyping of influenza-positive specimens is performed at no charge.

We appreciate your participation in influenza surveillance efforts. For information on requisitions or influenza PCR testing, please contact the laboratory at (707) 784-4410 or visit our website.

Sincerely,

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