

**Washington State Public Health Laboratories  
Advisory to Clinical Labs in Washington State**

**April 24, 2009**

As of April 24th the CDC announced the detection of “swine flu” (influenza A H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub>) in six patients who reside in California and two who reside in Texas.

(<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/investigation.htm#residents>). **At this time, there are no known cases of swine flu in Washington State.**

In order to enhance the surveillance for this novel virus, the Washington State Public Health Laboratories (WAPHL) is requesting that all laboratories testing for influenza submit **positive Influenza A** samples to WAPHL for confirmation and for sub-typing, until further notice.

**Specimen types to be submitted are:**

- **Viral Culture and PCR Laboratories:** Please refer all specimens that are positive for influenza A to WAPHL for confirmatory testing and sub-typing, until further notice. Submit actively growing positive viral cultures in the viral tube with 2 ml of viral culture media on dry ice.
- **Rapid Testing Sites:** Please forward all specimens testing positive for influenza A to WAPHL for confirmatory testing and sub-typing, until further notice. Send an aliquot (2ml) of the original suspension (not exposed to kit reagents) in viral transport media on chemical cold packs.
- **For patients presenting with influenza-like-illness (ILI) within 7 days of travel to San Diego or Imperial counties in California or to San Antonio, Texas, or Mexico send a nasopharyngeal specimen in viral transport medium to the WAPHL for testing. Specimen must be received at WAPHL within 72 hours after collection for PCR testing.**

Laboratories should refer to the Washington State Public Health Laboratories Directory of Services for directions on packaging and shipping.

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/Forms/DirServ30.pdf>

This virus is considered a BSL2 agent at this time. Clinical laboratories opting to perform virus culture should do all work in a biosafety cabinet. Additional respiratory and eye protection is recommended.

If you need technical assistance or have specific questions, please contact Yolanda Houze at 206-418-5471 or 206-391-5119, Denny Russell at 206-418-5562, or Beth Wieman at 206-418-5458.

For more information on swine influenza, see:

[www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm)