



Pat Quinn, Governor
Damon T. Arnold, M.D., M.P.H., Director

525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.idph.state.il.us

TO: Local health Departments, Regional Offices, Infection Disease Physicians, Hospital Emergency Departments, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Professionals, FQHCs

FROM: Bernard (Tom) Johnson; Chief, Division of Laboratories
Illinois Department of Public Health

DATE: May 1, 2009

SUBJECT: Updated Guidelines for Laboratory Submissions for H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)

Laboratory data is critical to determining the epidemiology of the spread of H1N1 Influenza. It is important for submitters to complete all information on the submission form in order that surveillance can be completed on each case. **Please remind staff to complete the data fields for patient name, date of birth, and patient address (city, county, state).** Your adherence to this request will ensure that the public health agency can identify the extent and spread of H1N1 Influenza.

As a reminder, approval of specimen submission is obtained through the Local Health Department. Local Health Departments will consult with the IDPH Immunization Section about sample submissions.

Collection of specimens should be with a Dacron or polyester tipped nasopharyngeal swab with a metal or plastic shaft, in a Viral Transport Medium, and shipped cold (4 degrees Celsius with wet packs). If necessary, a dry swab can be sent to the laboratory. Do not use swabs with calcium alginate, cotton tips, or wooden shafts. If the specimen cannot be shipped immediately, refrigerate, but do not freeze the specimen.

Locations in the immediate Chicago area should send specimens to the IDPH Chicago laboratory (Molecular Diagnostic Lab, 2121 West Taylor St., Chicago, IL 60612) and specimens outside the immediate Chicago area should be sent to the IDPH Springfield laboratory (Molecular Diagnostic Lab, 825 N. Rutledge St., Springfield, IL 62702). If you have specific questions about submission of approved specimens, contact the IDPH Chicago laboratory at 312-793-4760 or the IDPH Springfield laboratory at 217-782-6562.

Information about collection of appropriate specimens can be obtained on the IDPH web site <http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/laboratories/CDform082002a.pdf>.