



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
State Surgeon General

Guidance document: Florida Sentinel Influenza Surveillance Network (FSISN) Enhanced Influenza Surveillance

This situation is a rapidly evolving event nationally and internationally. This document will be considered out of date if another guidance document is issued at a later time.

April 24, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

On April 17, 2009, CDC determined that two cases of febrile respiratory illness occurring in children who resided in adjacent counties in southern California were caused by infection with a swine influenza A (H1N1) virus. Since that time, 6 additional cases have been identified. In total there are now 8 cases: 6 in California and 2 in Texas. The viruses from the seven cases are closely related genetically and contain a unique combination of gene segments that have not previously been reported in the United States or elsewhere. The viruses in the first two patients are susceptible to oseltamivir and zanamivir, but resistant to amantadine and rimantadine.

We are requesting the assistance of the participants in the Florida Sentinel Influenza Surveillance Network (FSISN) to enhance Florida's influenza surveillance to detect any additional cases related to this strain. There is current concern that human-to-human transmission of the swine influenza A (H1N1) is occurring and that transmission of this virus could be occurring in other areas of the nation.

We are requesting assistance in two important areas:

1) Submit specimens for testing:

- As resources permit, please collect specimens from *patients that meet the case definition for influenza or influenza-like-illness* (regardless of their travel history or swine exposure) and ship these specimens to the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Laboratories.
- Each week, please culture everyone meeting the ILI case definition, up to 5 individuals (regardless of their travel history or swine exposure).
- In addition, even if you have already sent 5 specimens, collect specimens from people who are part of influenza or ILI outbreaks or clusters
- In addition, even if you have already sent 5 specimens, collect specimens from people with more severe influenza or ILI illness and/or swine exposure and or travel to affected areas
 - i. Traveled to or live in San Diego County or Imperial County, California, Guadalupe County, Texas or Mexico.
 - ii. Have been in contact with ill persons or from these areas in the 7 days prior to their illness onset.

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Escambia County Health Department

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2) Report your ILI data:

- Please continue to report your weekly influenza and influenza-like-illness patients seen in your practices on a weekly basis. Reports should be received no later than 5 pm on Tuesdays.

Specimen Collection:

- Collect throat or nasopharyngeal swab specimens from those patients with influenza-like illness (ILI). *Definition of ILI: Fever $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100°F) and a cough and/or sore throat*
- Please collect up to 2 swabs from each patient with ILI
- Preferred specimen is an oropharyngeal swab or nasopharyngeal swab; most other routine respiratory specimens are also acceptable.
 - nasopharyngeal swabs (NOT nose swabs) (must have an adequate volume of sample or the test will not be valid)
 - nasopharyngeal aspirates
 - bronchial wash
 - sputum (NOT saliva)
- Specimen should be collected within 3 days of onset of illness and no later than 5 days after onset of symptoms.
- If the patient is hospitalized with pneumonia, specimens from the lower respiratory tract (e.g., tracheal aspirate, bronchoalveolar lavage) should also be obtained.
- When influenza is detected in a clinical laboratory by RAPID TESTING methods, please send an aliquot (1-2 ml) of the original suspension (not exposed to test kit reagents) in viral transport media or sterile diluent; or if an additional original specimen is available, that is preferable.
- If influenza is detected in a clinical laboratory by VIRAL CULTURE, please send the actively growing viral culture tube with 2 ml of viral maintenance media

Specimen shipping:

- Ship to Bureau of Laboratories -Tampa or -Jacksonville (whichever is your servicing Laboratory)
- Keep specimens refrigerated at 4°C and sent on cold packs
- Ship on gel ice no later than 48 hours post collection. They must be refrigerated at all times after collection.

Providers should already have on hand their specimen collection and shipping supplies as provided from the Bureau of Laboratories.

- Locate the specimen collection and testing kits to ensure the necessary supplies including swabs and viral transport media are on hand and available for use.
- Contact the appropriate BOL servicing laboratory facility if replacement materials are needed.
- Store the gel ice packs in an accessible freezer until needed
- If the media is outdated, but still clear and pink, that is, not cloudy or yellow-orange, it can still be used if necessary until replacements are received.
 - The expiration date is the last day of the month printed on the wrapper.

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If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the Bureau of Epidemiology 850-245-4401 or your local county health department for information. You may also contact the Bureau of Laboratories directly through the contact number you received with the specimen collection kits to order replacement testing materials. Additional information can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm>

Thank you,
Bureau of Epidemiology and the Bureau of Laboratories

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