

**MDCH BOL Flu Collection Guide Lab Update #6**  
Updated May 6, 2009

**Ordering flu specimen collection supplies from MDCH BOL**

The recent activities of novel Influenza A virus have placed a demand on laboratory supplies. The MDCH BOL has accelerated efforts in concert with local health departments to distribute specimen collection kits.

**Clinicians/Health Care Providers – those with an occasional need for supplies:**

Contact your local health department for flu specimen collection supplies.

**Clinical Laboratories – those with a higher volume need for supplies:**

You may order complete kits (swab, viral transport medium, requisition form and mailer) **by fax 517-335-9039** from the MDCH Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) by requesting “Unit 45” or “Flu Kit” on the request form found at: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dch-0568\\_7396\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dch-0568_7396_7.pdf)

You may also order swabs or VTM separately on the same form by writing in the “Miscellaneous Requests” section, on page 2.

**Acceptable Substitutes for Supplies in Flu Collection Kits:**

<b>Step 1: Use swab to collect NP (nasopharyngeal) specimen</b>		
Instructions for collecting NP specimens may be found at <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0772_7497_7.pdf">http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0772_7497_7.pdf</a>		
<b>IMPORTANT: Follow current interim CDC recommendations</b> for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in a Healthcare Setting: <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm</a>		
<b>Swabs</b>		
<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Acceptable Substitute</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Flocked NP swab	Synthetic tip swab (e.g. polyester or Dacron®) with aluminum or plastic shaft	<b>Do NOT use swabs with calcium alginate tips, cotton tips or wooden shafts</b>
<b>Step 2: Insert swab into Viral Transport Medium (VTM)</b>		
<b>Preferred VTM:</b>	<b>Acceptable Substitute</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Universal Transport Medium (UTM) - 3 mL <i>or</i> M4RT - 3 mL	Sterile, normal (physiologic) saline <i>or</i> sterile PBS (phosphate buffered saline) – 2 mL  Using sterile technique, place in a sterile leakproof container*	VTM or saline can be stored at room temperature until the NP specimen is placed into tube; <b>then it must be kept cold</b> (refrigerated at 4 deg C) but <b>not frozen</b> . Ship to MDCH Bureau of Labs as soon as possible.

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	<p><b>*Acceptable containers for saline / PBS:</b></p> <p>Sterile, <u>leakproof</u> plastic tube such as a 15-mL conical centrifuge tube with screw-cap</p> <p>Wrap lid tightly with tape or parafilm to prevent specimen leakage</p>	<p><i>Specimens received in any of these containers are <b>not accepted</b>:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>urine cups</i></li> <li>• <i>glass tubes</i></li> <li>• <i>snap-cap tubes</i></li> <li>• <i>Any transport designed for bacterial culture (Stuart's, Amies, etc.)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3: Label specimen. Specimens MUST be properly labeled with patient name, date of birth, and a unique numerical identifier (medical record number, lab specimen number, etc.)</b></p>		
<p><b>Step 4: Refrigerate specimen. All of these transports must be kept cold after inoculation, but do not freeze.</b></p>		
<p><b>Step 5. Complete a test requisition, form DCH 0583, found at:</b>  <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf">http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf</a></p>		
<p>All information on the test requisition <b>must</b> match the specimen label exactly.</p>		<p>Indicate in lower corner (MDCH Prior approval given by:)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If patient is hospitalized;</li> <li>• Name of person approving test;</li> <li>• Date of approval;</li> <li>• Local health dept. that approved</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 6: Contact local health department for case reporting or testing approval (if needed).</b></p>		
<p><b>Step 7: Arrange transport to MDCH lab</b></p>		
<p><b>Step 8: Results reporting:</b> Results will be reported to the submitter via the MDCH lab computer system and results will be available to the local health department via the MDSS reporting system <b>as soon as they are released</b>. Please <b>do not call</b> the lab for results, or call to ask if your specimen is on the day's run. With the increased demand for testing, we are unable to answer questions regarding the status of testing on individual specimens. <i>Thank you.</i></p>		

Issues regarding collection or shipping supplies can be directed to:  
 Val Reed ([reedv@michigan.gov](mailto:reedv@michigan.gov)) or Marty Boehme ([boehmem@michigan.gov](mailto:boehmem@michigan.gov)).