



Accelerated Subtyping of Influenza A in Hospitalized Patients: Guidance for Clinicians and Laboratories in Arkansas

Summary

Clinicians and laboratories in Arkansas are encouraged to test for influenza in patients with suspected influenza and, going forward, [expedite the subtyping of influenza A-positive specimens from hospitalized patients with influenza A](#), particularly those in an intensive care unit (ICU).

Key Recommendations

- Subtype influenza A-positive specimens from hospitalized patients, as soon as possible and within 24 hours of obtaining the result.
 - [If influenza A subtyping IS available at the hospital or clinical laboratory:](#)
 - Send all unsubtypeable influenza A specimens [i.e., negative for A(H1) and A(H3)], regardless of hospitalization status, to the Arkansas State Public Health Laboratory (SPHL).
 - [If influenza A virus subtyping IS NOT available at the hospital or clinical laboratory:](#)
 - Send specimens that are positive for influenza A from hospitalized patients to the SPHL.
 - Alternatively, specimens can be sent to a commercial clinical laboratory.
 - If the results indicate unsubtypeable influenza A [i.e., negative for A(H1) and A(H3)], send remaining specimen to the SPHL.
 - [Specimen collection and submission instructions](#) are available on the SPHL website.
 - Laboratories should use the [ADH Laboratory Web Portal](#) to order the influenza surveillance test.
 - Do not batch specimens for consolidated or bulk shipment to the SPHL if that would result in shipping delays for any such specimen.
 - Please report influenza hospitalizations and deaths within 24 hours through the [ADH Influenza Surveillance Website](#).
- Subtyping is also especially important in people who have a history of [relevant exposure](#) to animals infected or possibly infected with avian influenza A(H5N1) viruses, regardless of hospitalization status.
 - Due to low or unknown sensitivity, negative results from antigen detection tests, including rapid influenza diagnostic tests, do NOT exclude influenza A(H5N1) infection in symptomatic patients.
 - Additional guidance related to influenza A(H5N1) [testing](#), [treatment](#), [infection control](#), and [prevention](#) is available.
- **Please notify the ADH Zoonotic Disease team [immediately at 501-280-4136 \(or 1-800-554-5738 outside of normal business hours\)](#) about any suspected avian influenza A(H5N1) cases.**