



CLINICAL PRACTICE CHANGE

Date: January 8, 2013
To: St. Boniface Hospital Physicians
From: Dr. Michelle Alfa, Medical Director, Clinical Microbiology Discipline, DSM
Michelle Alfa
Dr. P. Lagacé-Wiens, Clinical Microbiology Discipline, DSM
P. Lagacé-Wiens
Re: **Influenza A and B testing**

TAKE HOME MESSAGE:

Influenza A and B testing is available from the on-site Microbiology Laboratory for inpatients at the Saint-Boniface Hospital during influenza season. Only results of on-site testing are available in EPR.

Since 2009, on site influenza testing has been available at the Saint-Boniface Hospital during influenza season. This memo serves to remind you of the testing and specimen requirements and to inform you that the official influenza season is upon us.

Testing for influenza A and B virus will be done from Monday to Friday 8:00 to 14:00. Turnaround times are same-day if received during testing hours and next-testing-day if received outside of testing hours (e.g. Monday for specimens received late on Friday). Specimens will only be processed on site for inpatients presenting with influenza-like illness. Serotyping is not performed on-site.

Key information:

Only nasopharyngeal swabs (NP) will be accepted for on-site testing. Other specimens will be forwarded to Cadham Provincial Lab (CPL). Nasal and throat swabs are inappropriate for influenza testing. **Note: Nares swabs are not acceptable for viral studies and represent a suboptimal sample with risk of false negative results. These will not be processed on-site.**

Submit specimens in viral transport medium (VTM) containing the appropriately collected flocced NP swab.

Please use Cadham Provincial Laboratory (CPL) test requisitions for all requests, as samples will be forwarded to CPL for additional virus testing as required. **Indicate the test request as “viral studies”.**

Reports of Influenza A and B testing done on-site at SBH, will be issued in the electronic patient record under microbiology testing. Be aware that other virology results for tests done at CPL will continue to be reported through paper reports from CPL.

Please do not hesitate to contact Dr. M. Alfa at (204) 237-2105 or Dr. P. Lagace-Wiens (Section Lead Molecular Diagnostics) at (204) 237-2483 for more information on this test.