

Memo

To: PHYSICIANS LABORATORY SERVICES CLIENTS
Date: OCTOBER 1, 2009
From: Shari Talbert, Microbiology Supervisor
Re: **H1N1 INFLUENZA VIRUS LATEST GUIDELINES**

1. The Nebraska Public Health Lab now states that **not everyone, with influenza-like illness, needs to be tested for H1N1, and that clinical diagnosis is sufficient for most patients.**

The CDC and The Nebraska Public Health Lab recommend testing only those patients with severe respiratory illness and those at highest risk of complications from influenza.

2. **Physicians Lab offers: Test #1592 Influenza A and B Virus Antigen Screen**
Specimen Collection: Under "Specimen Requirements" in the Test Directory, click on "Additional Information" for step by step directions on how to obtain the specimen.
Specimen: Nasal washes or nasopharyngeal swab in M4 media
Do not use calcium alginate swabs.
Storage: Refrigerated 2 days.
Performed: Mon – Sun. Reported within 24 hours.
Positive results are called.
CPT code: 87276; 87275
Cost: \$60.00
Note: Test #1592 detects high levels of the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus; however the sensitivity of this test declines as the level of the virus decreases. Therefore, a negative result does not rule out infection with the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. In particular cases, additional testing such as PCR may be warranted.
3. Confirmatory testing for H1N1 Virus by PCR is available by ordering:
Test #1427 Respiratory Viral Panel by PCR Cost: \$400.00
Note: This test includes H1N1 subtyping and other respiratory viral pathogens.
4. **Collection of a proper specimen is the most important factor in obtaining a quality test result.** A video demonstrating how to collect a proper nasopharyngeal swab can be viewed at: <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/H1N1flu/clinicians.htm>.

For questions, please the Microbiology Laboratory at 402 731-4145 or 1-800-642-1117