

Indiana Health Alert Network

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### ISDH Lab Submission and Case Investigation Changes For Novel Influenza A (H1N1)

The ISDH is modifying its laboratory submission and case investigation guidelines in response to new CDC recommendations and to conduct more effective and efficient surveillance of the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. National and statewide surveillance data continue to show that infection caused by the H1N1 virus is mild and widespread, Indiana and several other states are focusing now on maintaining outpatient sentinel surveillance and surveillance of hospitalized cases in an effort to conserve resources and begin planning for the fall influenza season.

Beginning Thursday, May 14, viral specimen submission to the ISDH Laboratory to rule out infection with the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus strain will be limited to:

- 1) The 30 pre-established sentinel providers who participate in Indiana's Influenza Sentinel Physicians Surveillance Network. Sentinel providers are encouraged to continue to submit specimens on patients presenting with influenza-like illness (ILI), which is defined as fever greater than or equal to 100 degrees F with cough or sore throat.
- 2) Specimens from patients in the following high risk groups:
  - Hospitalized patients
  - Pregnant women
  - Health care workers
  - Immunosuppressed
  - 5 years of age or younger
  - 65 years of age or older
- 3) Any death associated with ILI.

The courier service used to transport specimens from distribution points across the state will end at the close of business on May 13. Providers may return unused specimen collection kits to their local health departments.

Specimens that were submitted prior to May 14 and are still in transit or have arrived at the ISDH Laboratory will still be tested. Testing priority will be given to those specimens submitted from patients living in Public Health Preparedness Districts\* where confirmed cases have not yet been identified. Specimens collected after May 14 from patients who are not included in the above high risk groups or that were not collected at sentinel sites will NOT be tested.

Beginning May 14, the ISDH Surveillance and Investigation Division will restrict investigations to the six high risk groups described above.

In this manner, the ISDH will continue to characterize the virus and describe any laboratory or clinical changes in its presentation. The ISDH will communicate findings from this new surveillance strategy to all health care providers throughout the state in a timely fashion.

Updated virology lab submission forms for sentinel clinics and hospitals are located at [www.h1n1.in.gov](http://www.h1n1.in.gov). For further questions, please contact:

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\*There are 10 Public Health Preparedness Districts in Indiana. As of May 12, 2009, confirmed cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) had not yet been identified in Districts 3, 8, 9, and 10. A District map is located at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/17944.htm>.