SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Avian Flu (Influenza A/H5) Testing Update

Avian Flu (Influenza A/H5) Virus Testing at Labcorp

Effective December 16, 2024, Labcorp will introduce a new test for Influenza A with H5 subtype detection. This new assay detects influenza A and influenza B from a nasopharyngeal swab (NP) collected in universal or viral transport media (UTM or VTM) using nucleic acid amplification (NAA). Specimens that show a "detected" result for influenza A will be further tested for the presence of the H5 subtype by NAA. Specimens should be submitted **frozen** (preferred) or refrigerated.

New test available December 16, 2024

Test No.	Test Name	Viruses Identified
140046	Influenza A and Influenza B With Reflex to H5 Subtyping, NAA	Influenza A and B, H5 subtype

Avian Flu (Influenza A/H5) Virus Testing Guidance

This Influenza A with H5 subtype detection test should be used only for patients who meet the most current clinical and epidemiological criteria for H5-specific testing, as recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This test is validated for nasopharyngeal (NP) collections only and is intended to be used for patients presenting with respiratory symptoms consistent with influenza-like illness (ILI). Patients at risk for Influenza A/H5 and who have conjunctival symptoms only may not show a positive result for Influenza A/H5 using an NP swab. See the Questions and Answers section on the reverse for more details on this testing.

Other Respiratory Testing

For respiratory virus testing for seasonal influenza A and B, as well as other common respiratory pathogens, we recommend the following NAA tests:

Labcorp offers

Test No.	Test Name	Viruses Identified
140165	Influenza A and Influenza B, NAA	Influenza A and Influenza B
140163	Influenza A, Influenza B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus, NAA	Influenza A, Influenza B and RSV
139900	2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), NAA	SARS-CoV-2
140147	2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) With Influenza A and Influenza B	SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A and Influenza B
140140	2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) With Influenza A, Influenza B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus, NAA	SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A, Influenza B and RSV
140205	Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), NAA	RSV

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Q&A | Avian Flu (Influenza A/H5) Testing Update

1. What test number should I order for the new Influenza A and Influenza B With Reflex to H5 Subtyping test?

A: The test number for **Influenza A and Influenza B With Reflex to H5 Subtyping, NAA** is 140046.

This test is designed to detect influenza A and influenza B using a highly sensitive nucleic acid amplification method. If influenza A is detected, additional testing will be performed to determine if the influenza A subtype is H5.

2. When should Influenza A and Influenza B With Reflex to H5 Subtyping, NAA [140046] be ordered?

A: The H5-subytpe of influenza A is associated with avian influenza (bird flu) and is known as a high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI). Currently in the U.S., outbreaks of avian influenza have been identified in several states associated with livestock, poultry and wild birds. Humans who have unprotected animal exposures are most at risk for the acquisition of influenza A H5.

According to the CDC, "clinicians should consider the possibility of HPAI A (H5N1) virus infection in persons showing signs or symptoms of acute respiratory illness or conjunctivitis who have relevant exposure history."[1]

As this test is validated for nasopharyngeal (NP) collections and is intended to be used in patients presenting with respiratory symptoms, patients who are at risk for Influenza A/H5 and who have conjunctival symptoms only may not show a positive result using an NP swab.

3. What specimen is acceptable for Influenza A and Influenza B With Reflex to H5 Subtyping, NAA [140046]?

A: The new test requires an NP swab collected in a universal or viral transport media (UTM or VTM). NP swabs should be collected per standard techniques and promptly submitted to the laboratory **frozen** (preferred) or refrigerated.

Note that the specimen collection requirements for this test may differ from the specimen requirements of other laboratories. Please refer to Labcorp's online Test Menu for the latest specimen collection requirements.

4. Is the new test cleared by the FDA?

A: This test is a laboratory-developed test that has not been reviewed, cleared or authorized by the FDA. This test was developed and its performance characteristics determined by Labcorp following CLIA requirements for clinical laboratory testing.

5. Will Labcorp report results of this test to public health authorities?

A: Labcorp reports laboratory test results as required to various public health reporting agencies. In addition, samples may be submitted for additional confirmatory testing as requested by state health departments or the CDC. Clinicians should work closely with their state/local health departments to address any questions or concerns.

1. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza A(H5N1) Virus: Interim Recommendations for Prevention, Monitoring, and Public Health Investigations. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/prevention/hpai-interim-recommendations.html. Updated November 8, 2024. Accessed December 2024.

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