

UNIVERSITY OF
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MEDICAL CENTER

Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

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TO: Rochester area Providers and Nursing Homes

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Subject: 2006-2007 Winter Virus Season

Many viruses are distinctly seasonal. Each year at this time we provide you with an updated review of laboratory test offerings for the "winter" viruses.

COMPREHENSIVE RESPIRATORY VIRUS CULTURE

This culture includes the following viruses: Influenza A and B, Parainfluenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus, Adenovirus, Rhinovirus, Cytomegalovirus, Herpes Simplex Virus, Enterovirus and Varicella-Zoster Virus. Recommended specimens include nasopharyngeal swabs and/or pharyngeal swabs in Viral / Chlamydia Transport Media (VCTM), NP washes or sputum in sterile containers. Cultures are in progress for 14 days, most positives are reported after 3 to 7 days in culture. Check the "VIRUS CULTURE" box on the requisition. One VCTM tube containing 1-2 NP swabs contains adequate volume of specimen for a Comprehensive Respiratory Virus culture and Influenza/RSV testing.

INFLUENZA / RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS TESTING

Both Influenza A/B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus detection are performed from November until April. Antigen detection (EIA) and a short culture for increased sensitivity are performed. Either or both tests can be performed on one VCTM tube containing 1-2 nasopharyngeal swabs or on NP wash specimens in a sterile container. The EIA tests are performed multiple times daily. Influenza culture takes 3 days and RSV culture takes 2-3 days from date of set-up. Positive results will be phoned to the patient location. Negative results will be reported by computer only.

NOTES:

During the winter season, all specimens for Influenza or RSV screen will be tested by both the EIA and the supplemental (2-3 day) culture. The culture will be billed only when the EIA result is negative, requiring the additional testing (reflex testing). If you wish to request EIA only or culture only, you must use the following wording:

"EXCEPTION: DO ONLY EIA (OR CULTURE) FOR _____ (Influenza or RSV)."

INFLUENZA testing: The EIA used for Influenza testing is the QuickVue Influenza A+B test from Quidel. The sensitivity and specificity of this assay last season was 53% and 99% respectively. Nasal wash and NP specimens yield the best sensitivity. Other respiratory specimens are less sensitive. Influenza antigen detection testing will be available on all shifts, 24 hours a day.

RSV testing: The EIA used for RSV testing this year is the QuickVue RSV test from Quidel. The manufacturer's sensitivity and specificity for nasopharyngeal swabs are both 92%. We will monitor these data as the season progresses. Nasal wash and NP specimens give the best sensitivity. Throat swabs are not recommended. RSV antigen detection testing will be available on all shifts, 24 hours a day.

SARS and Avian Influenza testing: If these emerging infections are suspected, contact Infection Control (275-7716) and the Virus Lab (275-7801) before collecting specimens. Travel to the endemic area (or contact with an infected traveler) is mandatory criteria for specialized testing at the NYS Dept of Health and/or CDC.