



PROVIDER UPDATE

Novel H1N1 Flu (aka "Swine Flu")

For Questions, contact:
Communicable Disease Unit @ 454-4114
or Santa Cruz County Public Health Lab @ 454-5445



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

May 1, 2009

➤ **WHO to test?**

Test patients that have both SYMPTOMS **AND** patient HISTORY as listed below:

SYMPTOMS

- FEVER (≥ 100 °F)
AND
- RESPIRATORY illness (such as: cough sore throat, etc.),
OR
- Patient is hospitalized with severe respiratory illness or atypical influenza presentation (such as sepsis-like syndrome)

HISTORY

- Travel to an area with reported cases of novel H1N1/Swine Flu
OR
- Close contact with a case of novel H1N1/Swine Flu

PLEASE document symptoms and history on lab submission form. Specimens submitted without documentation of required symptom and history profile will be considered low priority for testing.

➤ **HOW to test?**

Rapid flu tests have a relatively high rate of false negative and false positive results. Therefore, do not rely on them before obtaining the NP specimens described below.

Collect up to 2 **nasopharyngeal** (NP) specimens using **Dacron swabs**. Place in a standard container with liquid viral transport media (VTM).

- Collect specimens within 24-72 hours of symptom onset and no later than 5 days after symptoms
- Refrigerate specimens at 4 °C and send on cold packs within 5 days of collection. If samples will be received in the Public Health Lab > 5 days from collection, freeze at -70°C or below and ship on dry ice
- If the patient is hospitalized with pneumonia, specimens from the lower respiratory tract (e.g. tracheal aspirate, bronchoalveolar lavage) should be obtained, if possible
- Specimens should be transported to the:
Santa Cruz County Public Health Lab (SCCPHL)
1080 Emeline Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: 454-5445; Fax: 454-5000
- A submittal form must be included with the specimen:
<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/alerts/pdf/Lab%20Submittal%20Form%20fill-in%20form.pdf>

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Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

***** PLEASE NOTE:** THE SCCPHL WILL BE OPEN OVER THE WEEKEND OF 5/2/09 AND 5/3/09 TO RECEIVE SPECIMENS. The SCCPHL will be picking up influenza specimens once each day on Saturday and Sunday at Santa Cruz Medical Foundation Laboratory on Soquel Avenue, Dominican Hospital Laboratory, and Watsonville Community Hospital Laboratory for transportation to Santa Clara County Public Health Laboratory for testing. Other providers may leave specimens at these locations for pick up. Contact the SCCPHL regarding specimen transportation.

➤ **WHO to treat with antiviral medication?**

Use antiviral treatment (zanamivir/Tamiflu or oseltamivir/Relenza) for **SEVERELY ILL** probable (confirmed A, non-H1/H3) or confirmed cases of novel H1N1/Swine Flu - - especially for patients with underlying risks for complications

***Please refer to the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/) for interim guidelines on treatment of novel H1N1/Swine Flu.

➤ **WHO to prophylax with antiviral medication?**

There are only TWO groups who should receive antiviral prophylaxis:

1. Household or close contacts of probable or confirmed cases with underlying risk for complications
OR
2. Healthcare workers or first responders who have close contact with a probable or confirmed case **AND** who had a BREAK in their use of personal protective equipment.

➤ **HOW can healthcare workers protect themselves?**

- For comprehensive guidance, refer to http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines_infection_control.htm
- Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette infection control measures should be in place at the first point of contact that patients have with an office or facility. This includes, but is not limited to availability of surgical masks for patients with respiratory symptoms and quick placement or transport to an individual room.
- N-95 respirators should be used by health care workers who have direct contact with patients who are suspected to have novel H1N1/Swine Flu. The extent of further use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is defined in the above linked document.
- Health care personnel should not report to work if they have a febrile respiratory illness.

Thank you for your patience, as this is a continually and rapidly evolving situation.

~ Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency Clinics will test suspect cases that do not have a medical home.
The clinics are at 1080 Emeline Ave, Santa Cruz and 9 Crestview Drive, Watsonville. ~

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