



## Influenza – Important Testing Updates for the 2019/2020 Season

Welcome to *In the Loop*, the newsletter from UnityPoint Health – Des Moines Laboratories.

The purpose of this newsletter is to distribute valuable information to our service area, including new test availability, test updates regarding methodology, specimen collection, and normal values.

We may also include feature topics related to laboratory diagnostics and test utilization.

If you have suggestions for topics you would like to read about in the newsletter, please email [Kimberly.VonAhsen@unitypoint.org](mailto:Kimberly.VonAhsen@unitypoint.org)

**Per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Flu Surveillance as of the week ending January 4, 2020: Nationally, B/Victoria viruses are most common followed by A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. However, the predominant virus varies by region and age group. There is a low circulation of A(H3N2) and B/Yamagata viruses).**

A number of methodologies for detecting influenza viruses in respiratory specimens are available in the clinical laboratory. The most common are called “rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs).” RIDTs work by detecting the parts of the virus (antigens) that stimulate an immune response. These tests can provide results within approximately 10-15 minutes but are not as accurate as other flu tests. Therefore, a patient could still have the flu, even though the rapid test result is negative. Other flu tests are called “rapid molecular assays” that detect genetic material of the virus. Rapid molecular assays produce results in 30 - 60 minutes and are more accurate than RIDTs.

Rapid Molecular assay (PCR) for influenza is **PREFERRED** over rapid antigen test (RIDT) for *hospital based patients*. Rapid antigen testing is still useful and prevalent in the ambulatory setting; however, additional confirmation of negative results using a rapid molecular assay may be necessary if clinical symptoms indicate an influenza related illness.

### Effective January 15<sup>th</sup>, Testing Available for Hospital Based Patient

- includes Emergency Department, Inpatients, and Hospital Outpatient Departments

- |    |  |                          |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Influenza A /B by PCR  | Epic Order Code: LAB3147 |
| 2. | Respiratory Filmarray Panel which includes influenza A/B and other respiratory pathogens | Epic Order Code: LAB3222 |

### Performance Characteristics for Influenza A & B

| Test                                  |             | Sensitivity | Specificity | On Board Test Time * |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Influenza A & B by PCR [LAB3147]      | Influenza A | 98.1        | 98.5        | 25 mins              |
|                                       | Influenza B | 100.0       | 99.3        |                      |
| Respiratory FilmArray Panel [LAB3222] | Influenza A | 100.0       | 100.0       | 60 mins              |
|                                       | Influenza B | 100.0       | 99.9        |                      |

\*On board test time is the actual time on the instrument. This does not include collection, transport, or processing time.

**The Rapid influenza A/B antigens will be restricted from ordering on hospital based patients beginning Wednesday January 15<sup>th</sup>.**



# Did You Know?

## Laboratory Policies and Procedures

Laboratory Policies and Procedures are available in read only mode from the UPHDM Hub under the Policies & Compliance Tab or by direct link at [UPHDM Laboratory \(MediaLab\)](#)

The screenshot shows the UPHDM Hub interface. At the top, there is a search bar for the region and navigation icons for Profile Settings, Mail, IT Help, and a temperature indicator (31°). The main navigation bar includes Patient Care, Employees, Education & Training, Tools & Support, Inside UnityPoint Health, and Policies & Compliance. The Policies & Compliance section is expanded, showing a list of categories: Policies, Compliance, UnityPoint Health - Des Moines, Systemwide, Ancillary, Clinical Support, Forms, House-Wide, House-Wide Table of Contents, Human Resources, Infection Prevention, Integrated Service, Laboratory, Medical Staff, and Patient Care. A yellow box highlights the 'Laboratory' link under 'Integrated Service'. A second yellow box highlights the 'Policies & Compliance' tab in the navigation bar. An inset window titled 'Document Browsing by MediaLab' is also visible, showing search options and a list of documents.

*Ever wonder what location to choose when completing an Occurrence Report? Below are some helpful descriptions.*

## Occurrence Reporting (RL) Lab Locations

- **Lab - Blood Bank**: this is specifically for blood transfusion, blood product related issues and any issue occurring in the Blood Bank (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West).
- **Lab - Histology**: this is specially for Histology and Cytology samples (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West).
- **Lab - Hospital**: all issues related to collection at the hospital and laboratory testing performed in the hospital laboratories (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West). (EXCLUDING Blood Bank and Histology)
- **Lab - Non Hospital (Path Lab - Ankeny)**: all issues related to collection at the Pathology Laboratory draw stations located at Lakeview, North Ankeny and Downtown. Issues related to laboratory testing performed at Pathology Laboratory.