

H1N1 Cases

Below are two lists of items given to ED nurses at The Hospital of Central Connecticut in New Britain for screening and confirmatory testing of suspected H1N1 cases, developed by **Jeffrey A. Finkelstein**, MD, chief of emergency medicine:

Influenza Screen

1. Wash hands and wear gloves.
2. Wear N95 mask and face shield.
3. Use red topped culture for initial screen. Separate the two cotton tipped swabs. Swab a pharyngeal tonsil with one swab and the nasal cavity with the other swab. Gently insert swab along the floor of either nostril, beneath the inferior turbinate. Aiming toward the same-side earlobe, insert the swab approximately one half of the distance to the earlobe (typically 3-5 centimeters, depending on the age and size of the patient). Roll the swab several times against the nasal wall and withdraw. The entire process should not be painful - most patients describe a "tickling" sensation, such as that felt prior to sneezing, when properly performed.
4. Place cotton swabs back in to the sleeve.
5. Label specimen, place in bio-hazard plastic bag, order influenza A&B and send to the lab. Results should be available within 60 minutes.
6. Remove gloves in room and wash hands.

Influenza Virus Culture (Confirmatory Testing For Swine Flu)

1. Wash hands and wear gloves.
2. Wear N95 mask and face shield.
3. Specimens should be collected using swabs with a synthetic tip (e.g., polyester or Dacron®) and an aluminum or plastic shaft. Swabs with cotton tips and wooden shafts are not recommended. Specimens collected with swabs made of calcium alginate are not acceptable. Gently insert swab along the floor of either nostril, beneath the inferior turbinate. Aiming toward the same-side earlobe, insert the swab approximately one half of the distance to the earlobe (typically 3-5 centimeters, depending on the age and size of the patient). Roll the swab several times against the nasal wall and withdraw. The entire process should not be painful--most patients describe a "tickling" sensation, such as that felt prior to sneezing, when properly performed. Cut the metal holder and place in viral medium.
4. Fill out Connecticut Department of Public Health's Lab Microbiology Testing Service Form
5. Label Specimen, place specimen and form in bio-hazard plastic bag, order in Empower (if applicable) and Cerner (undefined lab, state in comments: Swine Flu Culture) and send to the lab. Results should be available within 24 hours.
6. Remove gloves in room and wash hands.