Influenza PCR

Test Description	Qualitative assay for the detection of influenza virus nucleic acid (RNA). Includes: • Influenza A/H1 • Influenza A 2009/H1 • Influenza A/ H3 • Influenza A/H3v • Influenza A/ H5 • Influenza A/H7 • Influenza B Victoria and Yamagata lineage
Test Use	To monitor circulating influenza strains and to aid in the diagnosis of patients with influenza-like illness (fever >37.8°C [100°F] AND cough or sore throat)
Test Department	Virology Phone: (860) 920-6662, FAX: (860) 920-6661
Methodology	Real-time Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction (rRT-PCR)
Availability	Daily, Monday-Friday
Specimen Requirements	• Nasopharyngeal or oropharygeal swab submitted in viral transport media • Respiratory specimens such as broncheoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirates, sputum, nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal aspirates or washes. Submit at least 2 mL liquid specimen in a sterile screw capped container. • Cell culture that is confirmed to contain influenza virus.
Collection Kit/Container	M4RT viral transport tube; Sterile polyester–tipped sampling swab; Category B shipping box with cold pack To obtain collection kit, refer to Collection Kit Ordering Information.
Collection Instructions	Collect specimens within 3 days of symptom onset. Use only polyester or Dacron-tipped swabs with plastic or aluminum shafts. Do NOT use calcium alginate or cotton-tipped, or wood shafted swabs. Immediately place swabs into viral transport media.
Specimen Handling & Transport	Store specimen at 2-8° C. Specimens should be received within 3 days of collection. Transport with an ice pack coolant.
Unacceptable Conditions	Unlabeled specimen Specimens that have leaked or containers that have broken in transit Improperly collected specimens Specimens not handled, stored, or transported as described above
Requisition Form	Clinical Test Requisition (select **Influenza PCR**)
Required Information	Name and address of submitter (and/or Horizon profile #) Patient name or identifier, date of birth, town of residence (city, state, zip) Specimen source/type, date collected, and test requested Please ensure patient name on the requisition matches that on the specimen.
Limitations	Negative results do not preclude influenza virus infection Positive and negative predictive values are highly dependent on prevalence A specific novel influenza A virus may not be detected or may be detected less predictably Performance of the assay has not been established in individuals who have received nasally administered influenza vaccine
Additional Comments	The rRT-PCR method employed for detecting influenza virus was developed by the CDC Influenza Branch and adapted for use by the CT SPHL