



**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY**  
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Test Order

Influenza A(H5) Real-time PCR

Synonym(s)	Influenza A(H5) PCR
Methodology	Real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR)
Acceptable Specimen Type(s) for Testing	<p>For individuals that meet clinical and epidemiologic criteria for influenza A(H5) collect the following specimens depending on symptomology:</p> <p><b>For patients with upper or lower respiratory symptoms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Upper respiratory specimens: anterior nares swab and oropharyngeal swabs</b>, in separate transport media vials.</li> <li>- <b>Lower respiratory specimens:</b> Patients with severe respiratory disease should also have lower respiratory tract specimens collected such as an endotracheal aspirate, bronchoalveolar lavage, or sputum.</li> <li>- <b>For patients with conjunctival symptoms:</b> For individuals that meet the clinical and epidemiological criteria for influenza A(H5) with <b>conjunctivitis</b> (with or without respiratory symptoms) <u>If conjunctivitis is present in both eyes, collect separate swabs from each eye and combine the swabs in a single transport media vial.</u> Instructions for conjunctival Sample collection can be found under the Additional Collection instruction section. Conjunctival specimens from patients with conjunctivitis have been more sensitive for detection of Influenza A(H5) than other specimens to date in 2024.</li> <li>- <b>Patients who have ingested raw dairy products</b> and have gastrointestinal symptoms, with or without respiratory symptoms, may also have a stool specimen collected in Cary Blair to be tested for enteric pathogens with the Biofire GI panel. Visit the Gastrointestinal Panel for specific collection instructions.</li> </ul>
Transport / Collection Medium	Specimens should be collected and placed into Universal viral transport media (VTM or UTM) Specimens should be refrigerated at 2-8°C for up to 72hrs. Alternatively ship specimens on dry ice in compliance with DoT and IATA regulations governing Biological Substances, Category B (UN 3373) Monday -Thursday. Specimen can also be sent via courier Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm.
Storage and Preservation of Specimen	Store at 2 – 8°C for up to 72 hrs and submit to the laboratory as soon as possible; otherwise freeze at ≤-70°C.
Minimum Volume Required	3 mL
Additional Collection Instructions	Contact San Francisco Communicable Disease Control at 415-554-2830 prior to requesting this test. SFPHL requisition required for all specimens. In addition, please fill out CDC 50.34 Specimen submission form <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/form.html">https://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/form.html</a> Conjunctival Sample Collection Instructions for Influenza A(H5) Testing <a href="https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/Conjunctival%20Sample%20Collection%20for%20Influenza%20A%28H5%29%20testing.pdf">https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/Conjunctival%20Sample%20Collection%20for%20Influenza%20A%28H5%29%20testing.pdf</a>
Additional Required Information	Label specimens with at least 2 patient identifiers.
Send Out?	
Turnaround Time	24 hours
Testing Restrictions	Results for this test will be reported as “presumptive”. Specimens will be sent to CDC for confirmation.
Requisition Form(s)	<a href="https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/DPH-LAB-COVID-Requisition-Form-Version-6.1.2023.pdf">https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/DPH-LAB-COVID-Requisition-Form-Version-6.1.2023.pdf</a>
Limitations / Notes / Disclaimers	Please refer Centers for Disease Control Health Alert Network for Influenza A(H5). <a href="https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2024/han00506.asp">https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2024/han00506.asp</a> Please refer to CDPH’s Human Influenza A(H5N1) Quicksheet (December 13,2024) <a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/CAHAN/Evaluation-and-Testing-for-Human-Avian-Influenza-A-H5N1-Infection.aspx">CDPH-Human-Avian-Influenza-A(H5N1)-Quicksheet-ADA.pdf</a> Please refer to CDPH’s Evaluation and Testing for Human Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Infection guidelines <a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/CAHAN/Evaluation-and-Testing-for-Human-Avian-Influenza-A-H5N1-Infection.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/CAHAN/Evaluation-and-Testing-for-Human-Avian-Influenza-A-H5N1-Infection.aspx</a>