Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
Specimen Collection and Shipment
North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health

The Communicable Disease Branch (919-733-3419) must approve testing for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) at NCSLPH prior to specimen collection. All HPAI specimens submitted to the NCSLPH must meet the testing criteria. HPAI guidance applies only to testing at the NCSLPH.

- *Failure to follow submission guidelines may result in specimen rejection.*

Specimen Collection

- **All specimens must be collected in**
  Viral Transport Media (VTM)
  Universal Transport Media (UTM)
- **Patient with respiratory symptoms only:**
  Vial 1: Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab
  Vial 2: Oropharyngeal swab AND Nasal swab (two swabs in one vial)
- **Patient with conjunctivitis (with or without respiratory symptoms:**
  Vial 1: Conjunctival swab
  Vial 2: Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab
  Vial 3: Oropharyngeal swab AND Nasal swab (two swabs in one vial)

  Use a synthetic tipped, sterile swab of appropriate size with a plastic or metal shaft. Do not use a calcium alginate swab or one with a wood shaft.
- **Label the vial containing the swab completely:**
  Specimen Type
  Patient Name
  Date of Birth
  Date of Collection
- **Store properly until shipment:**
  Refrigerate at 2-8°C for immediate shipment
  Freeze ≤ -70° C for storage longer than 48 hours
- **Completely fill out the Virology submission form. Select "Influenza" and write "HPAI".**

Specimen Shipment

- **Specimen collection supplies and packaging and shipping supplies can be ordered online from** NCSLPH Online Supply Ordering System
- **All specimens shipped via commercial courier must meet** Category B, UN3373 requirements
- **Call SLPH BTEP Duty Phone to coordinate sample shipment at 919-807-8600.**
- **Specimens MUST be received cold/frozen**
  Specimens received <72 hours after collection must be shipped on frozen ice packs and received cold (2-8ºC).

  Specimens received >72 hours after collection must be shipped frozen on dry ice.
- **Label the package completely:**

Attention: Virology/Serology Unit
North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health
4312 District Drive
Raleigh, NC 27607-5490

Result Reporting

Results are posted electronically to the NCSLPH Clinical and Environmental Lab Results website associated with the submitter's EIN number. Visit the NCSLPH website for account setup and tutorials.