



**SAN MATEO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY  
TEST INFORMATION**

**Section: Virology**

**Test Name: Influenza RT-PCR**

<b>Test Includes:</b> Real-Time PCR for Influenza A and B	
<i>Reporting</i>	
<b>Results Available:</b> 3 days	<b>Contact Number:</b> (650) 573-2500
<i>Reference</i>	
<b>Method:</b> RT-PCR	
<b>Turnaround Time:</b> 1-2 days	<b>Reference Range:</b> No Influenza RNA detected
<b>Limitations:</b> May not detect nucleic acid material in all cases	<b>Interpretation:</b> A negative test result does not indicate the patient is not infected. The laboratory test may not be able to detect very low levels of virus.
<i>Specimen Requirements</i>	
<b>Specimen Collection:</b> Use Dacron, Rayon or polyester swabs on metal or plastic shaft. Do not use Calcium alginate or wooden shaft swabs or gel or agar based transport.	<b>Sample Type:</b> Nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate; bronchoalveolar lavage; pleural fluid; tracheal aspirates; sputum.
<b>Volume/Amount Required:</b>	<b>Preferred Specimen:</b> Nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate
<b>Collection/Preservation:</b> Viral transport media (or Cary-Blair or Stuart but no gel or agar)	<b>Storage Instructions:</b> 2°-8°C, for ≤72 hours; >72 hours store at -70° C.
<b>Causes for Rejection:</b> Specimen collected on swabs with calcium alginate or cotton tips with wooden shafts. Specimen not refrigerated. Specimen too old. Improper specimen.	<b>Sample Container:</b>
<b>Sample Test Kit:</b>	<b>Availability:</b> Test Monday, Wednesday and Friday
<b>Diagnostic Information:</b> Detection of Influenza RNA by RT-PCR. Test identifies Types A and B and subtypes H1, H3 and H5. Absence of viral RNA does not necessarily indicate lack of infection.	
<i>Specimen Submission</i>	
<b>Request Form:</b> Standard Clinical Test Request form or through computer interface	<b>Specimen Handling:</b> Body fluids handled using universal precautions.
<b>Transport Temperature:</b> Keep cold at 2°-8°C, do not freeze.	<b>Shipping Requirements:</b> Triple-contained and packaged to meet requirements of DOT, USPS, PHS and IATA for shipping of clinical specimens.
<i>Billing</i>	
<b>CPT Code(s):</b> 87798	<b>Fees:</b> \$80.00
Effective Date: July 1, 2008	