



Messenger

Influenza and SARS CoV-2 Seasonal Surveillance

Influenza surveillance, coupled with surveillance for SARS CoV-2, begins for the 2020-2021 season this Sunday, September 27, 2020.

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory is soliciting the submission of specimens (nasopharyngeal swab in viral transport medium) for seasonal virus surveillance without charge. Mark on the requisition, "influenza/COVID-19 surveillance." Please submit:

Hospital in-patients

Specimens from patients who are hospitalized with influenza-like illness (ILI) and/or placed in an ICU, regardless of rapid test result.

Community health care providers and hospital out-patients

Specimens from patients with ILI and a positive rapid or PCR influenza test.

To avoid a fee, note on the lab test requisition:

- Rapid or PCR test results, if performed (including method such as "Rapid A +" or "PCR B+")
- Hospitals: Date the patient has been admitted and if they have been placed in ICU (for example: admitted 12/15, moved ICU 12/17)
- Out-patients: Rapid or PCR test results (such as Rapid or PCR A+,B-)

The requested submission of these specimens will allow public health officials to determine the starting point and the relative frequency of influenza transmission, and to provide guidance to the medical community regarding the efficacy of antiviral therapy.

Influenza virus activity is currently at a low level, as it has been for the summer months, while SARS CoV-2 transmission remains broadly active.

The SLO Public Health Laboratory participates as a member of the California Respiratory Laboratory Network and is capable of detection of new influenza virus strains or variants as well as the H5N1 strain and the H7N9 strains.

Questions?

Please contact Dr. Jim Beebe, Laboratory Director, at 805-781-5512 or jbeebe@co.slo.ca.us.

