

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 testing, collection, and shipping 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 VTM** (i.e., Remel M4RT)
- ◆ **Patient with respiratory symptoms only:**
VTM vial 1: Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab
VTM vial 2: Oropharyngeal swab AND Nasal swab
- ◆ **Patient with conjunctivitis:**
VTM vial 1: Conjunctival swab 1
VTM vial 2: Conjunctival swab 2
VTM vial 3: NP swab

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

- ◆ **All specimens must be packaged**
[UN3373 Category B, Biological Substance](#)
- ◆ **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 (2-8°C).

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.

