



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Epi Flash Report

Fort Bend County

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program

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2017-2018 Flu Season: Influenza Virus Testing Methods

Influenza activity continues to rapidly increase across Texas. In Fort Bend County, during the first week of December, the number of rapid test positive influenza A cases reported were only 14. The number of reported cases rose steeply in the last week of December to 101 cases. To date, there have been no reported deaths related to flu in Fort Bend County.

Although most influenza cases are not reportable by law in Texas, the collection of Influenza Like Illness (ILI) data from sentinel sites and the tracking of positive laboratory influenza tests assist Health officials in monitoring the degree of severity and the scope of the seasonal influenza virus activities in communities.

Laboratory influenza studies include: rapid influenza diagnostic tests for antigen detection, rapid molecular assay for influenza viral RNA or nucleic acid detection, immunofluorescence, direct (DFA) or indirect (IFA) fluorescent antibody staining for antigen detection, RT-PCR (singleplex and multiplex; real-time and other RNA-based) and other molecular assays for influenza viral RNA or nucleic acid detection, rapid cell culture (shell vials; cell mixtures; yields live virus) and viral tissue cell culture (conventional; yields live virus).

According to the CDC, the approved methods and the acceptable specimens for serological detection of influenza virus or for viral culture are as follows:

Method	Virus Type Detected	Acceptable Specimens	Test Time
Rapid Influenza Diagnostic Tests (antigen detection)	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab, aspirate or wash, nasal swab, aspirate or wash, throat swab	<15 min.
Rapid Molecular Assay [influenza viral RNA or nucleic acid detection]	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab, nasal swab	<20 minutes ⁶
Immunofluorescence, Direct (DFA) or Indirect (IFA) Florescent Antibody Staining [antigen detection]	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab or wash, bronchial wash, nasal or endotracheal aspirate	1-4 hours
RT-PCR (singleplex and multiplex; real-time and other RNA-based) and other molecular assays [influenza viral RNA or nucleic acid detection]	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab, throat swab, nasopharyngeal or bronchial wash, nasal or endotracheal aspirate, sputum	Varies (1 to 8 hours, varies by the assay)
Rapid cell culture (shell vials; cell mixtures; yields live virus)	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab, throat swab, Nasopharyngeal or bronchial wash, nasal or endotracheal aspirate, sputum; (specimens placed in viral transport media)	1-3 days
Viral tissue cell culture (conventional; yields live virus)	A and B	Nasopharyngeal swab, throat swab, Nasopharyngeal or bronchial wash, nasal or endotracheal aspirate, sputum (specimens placed in viral transport media)	3-10 days

Continue on Page 2

Environmental & Infectious Diseases in Fort Bend County

Diseases Notified to Texas DSHS	# of Investigations Completed in December 2017	# of Cases Notified to TX DSHS in December 2017	# of Investigations Completed from 01/01/2017 to 12/31/2017	# of Cases Notified to TX DSHS from 01/01/2017 to 12/31/2017
Influenza Outbreak	1	-	1	-
Influenza, human isolates	297	-	757	-
Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)	2	-	57	-
Rickettsia, unspecified	2	-	2	-
Streptococcus pneumonia, invasive disease (IPD)	1	1	18	17
Streptococcus, invasive Group A	4	1	17	5
Streptococcus, invasive Group B	2	2	87	35



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