

TO: ARRCM Health Care Providers

FROM: Allan Henrichs, Microbiology Technical Specialist
Thomas R. Treger, MD, ARRCM Laboratory Medical Director
Robert W. Stephenson, MD, AACH Laboratory Medical Director

DATE: November 6, 2015

SUBJECT: **New Rapid Influenza Test**

Beginning on 11/11/2015, ARRCM Microbiology will offer a new rapid test for Influenza A & B. It will be called **Influenza A & B by NAAT**. This test will also be performed on site at ATRMC and AACH and will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This test uses a novel isothermal Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NEAR – Nicking Endonuclease Amplification Reaction) to amplify and detect Influenza virus RNA. This reaction proceeds much more quickly than traditional real time PCR, resulting in a total test time of only 18 minutes, compared to 90 minutes for our existing real time PCR method. Both Influenza A and Influenza B are detected and will be reported. The 2009 H1N1 strain of Influenza A virus will also be detected, but will simply be reported as Influenza A.

Published sensitivities and specificities are 97.8%/96.6% for Influenza A and 92.9%/98.3% for Influenza B. We performed an extensive in-house comparison in January and February of 2015 with our existing real time PCR method and found no significant differences in results.

The preferred sample will be the same as the current test: a Nasopharyngeal Swab in M4 RT media transported immediately on ice to the laboratory.

For the time being, we will offer both influenza testing options:

1. **Influenza A& B by NAAT:** Order this test if very rapid test results will affect management of your patients. Note that we will only be able to perform 3 tests at one time with this method, so if we receive more than 3 specimens at once, the results of the later specimens will be delayed.
2. **Influenza A/B 2009 H1N1 PCR:** Order this test if very rapid turnaround time is not necessary OR if it is important to know if a positive Influenza A test is due to the 2009 H1N1 strain.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Allan Henrichs, ARRCM Microbiology Technical Specialist, 541-789-6300, Thomas R. Treger, MD, ARRCM Laboratory Medical Director, 541-789-4191, or Robert W. Stephenson, AACH Laboratory Medical Director, 541-789-4191.