



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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CDC Encourages Enhanced Influenza Surveillance for Summer 2024

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BACKGROUND

Given the current situation involving the multistate outbreak of avian influenza A(H5N1) in dairy cows, poultry, and other animals, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are encouraging enhanced influenza surveillance during the summer months of 2024. At this time, there have been no known human cases in Missouri; however, there have been three states with reported human cases connected with this current outbreak. Conjunctivitis has been associated with H5N1 infection in humans and respiratory symptoms were present in at least one case. Therefore, CDC is recommending that clinicians should consider influenza testing for patients with conjunctivitis and/or respiratory illness who are at a higher risk for contracting novel influenza, such as those with a history of exposure to dairy cows, poultry, wild birds, or swine. Conducting influenza surveillance remains critical in our ability to monitor for novel influenza A viruses, including avian influenza A(H5N1).

CDC, in collaboration with state, tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) public health agencies, has developed a multi-faceted summer influenza surveillance strategy which will enhance our ability to rapidly detect cases of avian influenza A(H5N1) and novel strains of influenza virus if they begin to develop in our communities. Your participation in this strategy will assist the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services in monitoring for avian influenza across the state.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING OF YOU

The Missouri State Public Health Laboratory (MSPHL) is requesting that our public health partners (including commercial laboratories) proactively increase respiratory sample submissions to our laboratory during the summer months when influenza transmission is typically low. We ask that samples meeting any of the criteria below be prioritized for submission:

- Specimens from patients that meet the criteria for avian influenza A(H5N1) testing
 - CDC guidance: <https://cdc.gov/bird-flu/php/severe-potential/index.html>
 - Specimen approval/collection: https://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/sphl_avianflu_instructions.pdf
- Influenza positive or suspect-positive specimens from Hospitalized/ICU patients
- Influenza positive or suspect-positive specimens from all severely ill persons
- Influenza A positive specimens that are subtype negative on tests designed to provide an influenza subtyping result (ex. BioFire)
- Influenza A positive specimens that are subtype influenza A(H1) and not influenza A(H1)pdm09 on tests designed to provide an influenza subtyping result
- Random sampling of all other influenza A/B positives, up to 5 per week

PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' vision is optimal health and safety for all Missourians, in all communities, for life.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION

For the most up-to-date specimen collection and submission guidance, please refer to the following:

Avian Influenza A(H5N1): https://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/sphl_avianflu_instructions.pdf

Seasonal Influenza: <https://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/influenza-covid-surveillance-specimen-submission-guidance.pdf>

Missouri State Public Health Laboratory Website: <https://health.mo.gov/lab/>

CDC Influenza A(H5N1) Situational Awareness: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm>

HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE?

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