

Indications for RT-PCR

RT-PCR testing for novel H1N1 influenza virus is indicated for patients with influenza-like illness (ILI) who are pregnant or hospitalized.

The Arkansas Public Health Laboratory will accept properly-collected specimens from these patients.

The results of RT-PCR tests should not affect patient management, since it should be based on clinical findings, and indicated treatment should be initiated immediately. Almost certainly, antiviral treatment delayed until a PCR result is available will be too late to be effective.

Positively confirming novel H1N1 infection in the selected groups is valuable for further characterizing the disease, and the Health Department requests that all patients with ILI who fall into one of the groups above have specimens submitted.