

2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Background

A cluster of pneumonia cases was first identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The causative agent of cases was later identified as a novel coronavirus that is currently being referred to as 2019-nCoV. It has also been referred to as Wuhan Virus. Within a matter of weeks, the virus has been detected in several Southeastern Asia countries. In addition, there have been at least two confirmed cases in the United States. The first case was detected in Washington State on January 21, 2020 in a traveler returning from Wuhan, China. More recently, a case was confirmed in Chicago, Illinois on January 24, 2020. Screening at many large airports (including Chicago O'Hare International) has been implemented for traveler's arriving from China.

Symptoms arising from infection with 2019-nCoV are non-specific and include fever and respiratory illness. Patients exhibiting these symptoms **AND** who have a recent travel history to Wuhan, China or close contact with a patient who is under investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV infection should be considered for testing.

Initial indications suggest that person-to-person transmission can occur, and that this virus is less virulent than similar coronaviruses like SARS and MERS. Patients under investigation should consider wearing a surgical mask (and if hospitalized, placed in isolation) until infection has been ruled out.

Testing

The current respiratory assays performed at ACL Laboratories will not detect 2019-nCoV infections. At present, the only test available is the 2019-nCoV PCR test. This test is only performed at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If Providers suspect a patient may be infected with this virus, the following actions must be taken:

- 1) Verify and obtain authorization. Pre-Authorization by the State Public Health Department is required. This authorization may be obtained by working with a local Public Health Department or directly with the State Public Health Department. The contact information is as follows.
 - a. IL Local Health Departments: <http://www.idph.state.il.us/LHDMAP/HealthRegions.aspx>
 - b. IL After Hours - IL State Public Health Department - 1-800-782-7860
 - c. WI Local Health Departments: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lh-depts/counties.htm>
 - d. WI State Department of Public Health – 1-608-267-9003
 - e. WI After Hours – WI State Department of Public Health – 1-608-258-0099
- 2) Notify Infection Prevention.
- 3) Collect the following specimen types, if possible:
 - a. Lower respiratory specimen (sputum, BAL). This specimen may be difficult to obtain in a patient with mild symptoms being seen as an outpatient and can be skipped.
 - b. Nasopharyngeal Swab in UTM.
 - c. Oropharyngeal Swab in UTM.
 - d. Serum – 5.0-10.0 mL of whole blood for children and adults and 1.0 mL of whole blood for infants in a serum separator tube.
 - e. OPTIONAL SPECIMENS – The following specimens should be collected if recommended by the Department of Public Health:
 - i. Stool Specimen
 - ii. Urine Specimen
- 4) Complete the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Person Under Investigation form on this website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/pui-form.pdf>. A hard copy is included with this bulletin.

- 5) Order a CREF (which is preferred) or MISC (Miscellaneous test), as this is dependent on your ordering system.
 - a. Indicate that you are “submitting multiple specimens for 2019-nCoV PCR at the State Lab.”
- 6) Collect the specimens and store/transport to ACL Laboratories refrigerated.
- 7) Submit the following to ACL:
 - a. Patient Specimens.
 - b. Person Under Investigation Form.
 - c. IL or WI State Lab Testing Requisition
 - i. IL Requisition: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/forms/communicable-diseases-laboratory-test-requisition-11122019.pdf>. A hard copy is included with this bulletin
 - ii. WI Requisition: An electronic version is not available. A hard copy is included with this bulletin.

Additional Information

If the patient has significant respiratory illness, routine respiratory virus testing such as the Respiratory Pathogen Panel (Test Order Code RPPNL) or Influenza PCR (Test Order Code FLUPCR) may be considered. These tests should not be delayed while waiting for results of the 2019-nCoV test.

ACL Laboratories team members handling/performing testing should work in a Biosafety Cabinet with standard personal protective equipment whenever these specimens are opened to perform testing. No additional safety precautions are required at this time.

Information regarding this testing is continually evolving as new information is discovered and updates to this bulletin will be made as new information becomes available.

Advocate Aurora Health (AAH) has a 2019 Novel Coronavirus toolkit that can be accessed at the following link <https://advocatehealth.sharepoint.com/sites/AO/Dept/infection-prevention/Pages/2019-nCoV-Coronavirus-Toolkit-.aspx>. The toolkit will also be accessible on Caregiver Connect in WI at the following link <http://heiwewbn014.dotnetnuke/Default.aspx?tabid=31564>. This toolkit will contain AAH specific information and will be continually updated as new information becomes available.