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DATE: October 5, 2015
TO: UCH Medical Staff, Housestaff, Patient Care Centers, and Outpatient Clinics
FROM: Kathleen G. Beavis, MD
RE: Influenza A/B and RSV PCR

The Clinical Microbiology Laboratory currently offers a Respiratory Panel (order code RBVP) with 20 viral and bacterial targets.

Effective October 5, 2015, clinicians will have a less expensive option for PCR testing for the seasonal viruses RSV, Influenza A, and Influenza B. The Xpert Flu/RSV XC Assay (order code IRP) from Cepheid offers comparable sensitivity and specificity and should be ordered when testing is needed only for Influenza (A and B) and RSV.

The new Influenza/RSV test may be an option for immunocompetent Emergency Department patients or other outpatients for whom hospitalization is not being considered, as well as for employees seen in Occupational Medicine. For inpatients or those being considered for admission, as well as for immunocompromised patients, the full Respiratory Panel may be more appropriate.

All patients undergoing IRP or RBVP testing should be placed on contact and droplet precautions. Refer to [Infection Control Guidelines](#) for instructions on proper isolation based on pathogen identified. Because the IRP tests for fewer pathogens, inpatients with a negative IRP will need to remain on contact AND droplet isolation for ≥ 7 days from symptom onset OR until symptoms resolve, whichever is LONGER. For patients with a negative RBVP, droplet isolation may be discontinued, but patients must remain on contact isolation for ≥ 7 days from symptom onset OR until symptoms resolve, whichever is LONGER.

Specimen requirements (same as RBVP):

Nasopharyngeal Aspirate or Flocked Nasopharyngeal Swab, submitted in viral transport medium.

Test ordering information:

The Influenza (A and B)/RSV test should be ordered in Epic using the code IRP “Influenza A/B and RSV PCR assay”.

If the entire Respiratory Panel is required, order in Epic using the code RBVP “Respiratory Panel”.

Test information and turnaround time:

IRP testing will be performed 24/7, October 5 through May 15. Turnaround time will vary depending on the volume of requests received, but at peak times the turnaround time for the Xpert Flu/RSV XC Assay will most likely be shorter than for the Respiratory Panel because of opportunities for increased throughput.

For questions, please contact Scott Matushek, Chief Medical Technologist, at 773-795-0055, or Angella Charnot-Katsikas MD, Assistant Director, at 773-834-2473.