



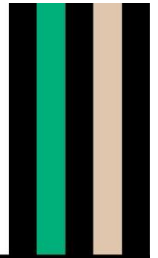
Winnebago County

Health Department

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Health ALERT



Awareness of Variant and Novel Influenza Viruses

June 23, 2023

The Winnebago County Health Department, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is encouraging healthcare providers to **test for influenza among persons with severe respiratory illness** during the summer months for continued local surveillance of Influenza A. Local Testing will assist in the ongoing surveillance of the highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1) as well as the increase in exposure to other variant influenza cases during agricultural fair season.

WCHD Asks All Healthcare Providers To:

- **Test** for influenza among persons with severe respiratory illness
- **Submit** influenza A positive samples from patients in the ICU for subtyping

Influenza A positive samples from ICU patients that are not subtyped in clinical labs can be submitted to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) laboratory for subtyping.

- Call 815-720-4050 with the case details to obtain an authorization code
- Approval for testing must be completed prior to sending specimens to IDPH lab

Avian influenza A viruses do not normally infect humans, but sporadic human infections have occurred. U.S. public health and clinical partners continue to monitor and respond to the global outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1). In November 2022, the U.S. surpassed the previous record for number of birds affected, making this the worst domestic outbreak of avian influenza in poultry, with more than 58 million poultry affected in the U.S. to date.

Please contact WCHD at 815-720-4050 with any questions about novel or variant influenza viruses.

Resources:

[Influenza Laboratory Test Requisition](#)

[CDC Viruses of Special Concern](#)

[Illinois 2023 County Fair Schedule](#)

