



To: Medical Staff, Nursing Units, and Laboratory Clients
From: Dr. Eric Thompson, M.D., Dr. Robert Littlejohn, M.D., and Dr. Stephen Ingels, M.D.
Subject: COVID-19, Influenza A and B, RSV testing
Date: November 16, 2023

For the 2023-2024 Flu season, the NRHS Laboratory will continue utilizing a combined, COVID plus Influenza A and B, testing protocol in accordance with CDC guidelines. COVID and Influenza tests will only be orderable as a panel; not as individual tests. If an individual test is ordered via manual requisition /order sheet, the order will be converted to an order for the combination panel (CDC, 2022).

Three (3) nasal swabs must be collected for COVID/FLU antigen testing, as our COVID test requires one swab, our FLU A/B requires one swab, and a third swab is needed for any confirmatory testing.

Note: All RSV antigen orders will require one additional nasopharyngeal (NP) swab.

Specimen Requirements:

- *Meditech Test Name:* COVFLURAPID
- *Specimen Type:* Three (3) Nasal Swabs in total
- *Container/Tube:* Separate or Same container
- *Transport:* Dry Swabs

Specimen Requirements:

- *Meditech Test Name:* RSVRAPID
- *Specimen Type:* One (1) nasopharyngeal swab
- *Container/Tube:* Blue screw top clean container
- *Transport:* Dry Swab

Performance:

For ED patients and outpatients, the COVID/FLU will be performed as a rapid antigen test, with a turn-around-time (TAT) of approximately 30 minutes. If rapid antigen results are positive for COVID, Flu A, and/or Flu B, the results will be reported and no further testing will be performed. If results for all three viruses are negative then the third swab will be tested using a PCR method.

Reference:

Positive for SARS-CoV-2	No additional testing performed
Positive for Influenza A	No additional testing performed
Positive for Influenza B	No additional testing performed
Negative for COVID, Flu A, & Flu B	3 rd swab tested via PCR confirmatory method

SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A, and Influenza B Results:

Results will be reported for SARS-CoV-2, Influenza A, and Influenza B on individual lines in the EMR. If initial tests are negative then the report will state, "PCR results pending".

If you have any questions, please contact the Microbiology Supervisor, Zac Ratzlaff, at 405-307-1146, or a Pathologist, at 405-307-1141.

RSV Results:

RSV testing during this season will be performed as a rapid antigen test. This test has a TAT of approximately 30 minutes. Negative results will not be reflexed to PCR.

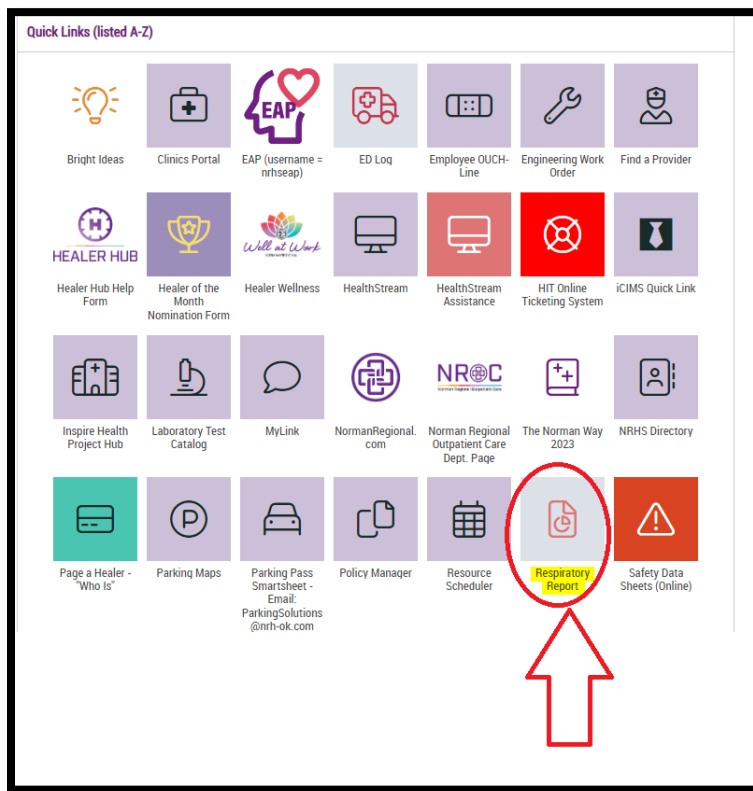
Respiratory Panel Testing Information:

We ask that Respiratory Panel testing (PCR for approximately 20 viral and bacterial organisms) be used judiciously due to limited testing capacity and the additional expense. The TAT is approximately 4 hours unless capacity is exceeded.

Additional Exciting News:

The Health System has a new tool to help physicians see which respiratory viruses are currently highest in our service area.

Please refer to the link located on the front page of the Norman Regional HealerHub for a current prevalence report showing the respiratory viral positive and percentage. The information in these graphs is data from testing performed at Norman Regional Health System laboratories.



Reference:

CDC. (2022, February). CDC: Information for Clinicians on Influenza Virus Testing. Retrieved from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/index.htm>

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