

Confirm Diagnosis by Laboratory Testing:

(Excerpt from Centers for Disease Control *Rapid Diagnostic Testing for Influenza: Information for Health Care Professionals*, 2016-2017 Seasonal Influenza homepage)

- Collect respiratory specimens from 3-4 residents and/or staff with ILI as soon as possible after symptom onset
- Rapid Influenza Diagnostic Tests (RIDTs) can be useful to identify influenza virus infection as a cause of respiratory outbreaks in any setting
- RIDTs produce quick results, but the results may not be accurate. False negative test results occur more commonly than false positive results, and are common during influenza season
- A negative RIDT result does NOT exclude a diagnosis of influenza in a resident with suspected influenza
- To minimize false RIDT results:
 - collect specimens as early in the illness as possible (testing specimens collected within 48-72 hours of illness onset when influenza viral shedding is highest) is more likely to yield positive RIDT results
 - follow manufacturer's instructions, including acceptable specimens (nasopharyngeal or nasal swab/aspirate/wash), and handling
 - Follow-up negative results with confirmatory tests (RT-PCR or viral culture) if a lab confirmed influenza diagnosis is desired
- If RIDTs are used, **respiratory specimens should also be sent for influenza testing by viral culture and RT-PCR** to provide detailed information on specific influenza virus subtype and strains, antiviral susceptibility data, and to verify RIDT test results
- If RIDTs are not available for rapid influenza testing, contact Butte County Public Health Department to arrange a submittal of respiratory specimens to CDPH Viral and Rickettsial Diseases Laboratory
- For additional information on use of RIDTs, view:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/index.htm>