



Human Avian Influenza A(H5N1) Nevada County Testing Guidance for Healthcare Providers Updated 2/12/2025

Summary of Recommendations

Healthcare providers should ask all patients with signs and symptoms consistent with acute respiratory tract infection or conjunctivitis if they have had:

- Exposure in the last 10 days to animals or people suspected or confirmed to have avian influenza A
OR
- Consumption of raw milk or raw milk products in the last 10 days.

If you encounter patients who work with infected animals, please encourage them to use [personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) and suggest they receive seasonal influenza vaccine during influenza season.

If patient answers yes:

- Consider avian influenza A.
- If avian influenza A infection is suspected, notify Nevada County Public Health immediately by calling (530) 265-1450. Then take the following steps:
 - Test for influenza A by PCR at a commercial, clinical, or public health laboratory with reflex to H5 subtyping:
 - Collect oropharyngeal (OP) and anterior nares swabs, preferably in two separate vials containing 2-3ml of viral or universal transport media (may also be combined in a single transport media tube).
 - Specific symptom guidance:
 - ❖ If conjunctivitis is present, also collect conjunctival swab(s).
 - ❖ If gastrointestinal symptoms are present, collect stool sample (and hold for future testing), if possible (*Influenza A testing is not currently validated for stool specimens*).
 - ❖ Specimens should be collected using swabs with synthetic tips (e.g., polyester or Dacron®) and an aluminum or plastic shaft
 - If patient has consumed raw milk products in the last 10 days, ask patient to retain and refrigerate the consumed raw product(s), if available, and take photos of brand labels displaying lot number, plant number, and expiration date information and send to Nevada County Public Health. Counsel person that the remaining product should not be consumed by people or pets and advise that the container be marked or securely closed (e.g., with tape) to prevent inadvertent consumption of the product.
 - Once influenza A results are available:
 - If respiratory and conjunctival samples (if collected) are *negative for influenza A*, no further testing needed. This is not an H5N1 case.
 - If respiratory and/or conjunctival samples (if collected) are *positive for influenza A* on testing at a commercial or clinical laboratory and H1/H3 or H5 subtyping has not been performed, order H5 subtyping by the laboratory if possible or ask laboratory to submit positive sample(s) to a public health laboratory that can perform H5 subtyping.

- If H1 or H3 subtype identified, no further testing needed. This is not an H5N1 case.
- If person has GI symptoms and initial respiratory +/- conjunctival tests are negative for influenza A and there is ongoing concern for H5N1 infection due to severity of symptoms or the amount of raw dairy exposure, consult Nevada County Public Health about possible testing of stool sample.
- If influenza A(H5) is detected in a specimen, immediately contact Nevada County Public Health at (530) 265-1450. If it is after hours, follow the after-hours reporting instructions in the outgoing voicemail message.

Resources:

[CDPH Avian Influenza A \(H5N1\) Information for Health Professionals](#)
[CDPH Avian Influenza A Infection Control for Healthcare Providers \(PDF\)](#)

Commercial lab tests for Influenza A with reflex to H5 subtyping:

ARUP Laboratories: <https://ltd.aruplab.com/Tests/Pub/3018970>

Labcorp: <https://www.labcorp.com/tests/140046/influenza-a-and-influenza-b-with-reflex-to-h5-subtyping-naa>

Quest: <https://testdirectory.questdiagnostics.com/test/test-detail/13998/influenza-a-h5-virus-rna-qualitative-real-time-pcr-respiratory?cc=MET>

Influenza A(H5) report available in 1-5 days, depending on the laboratory