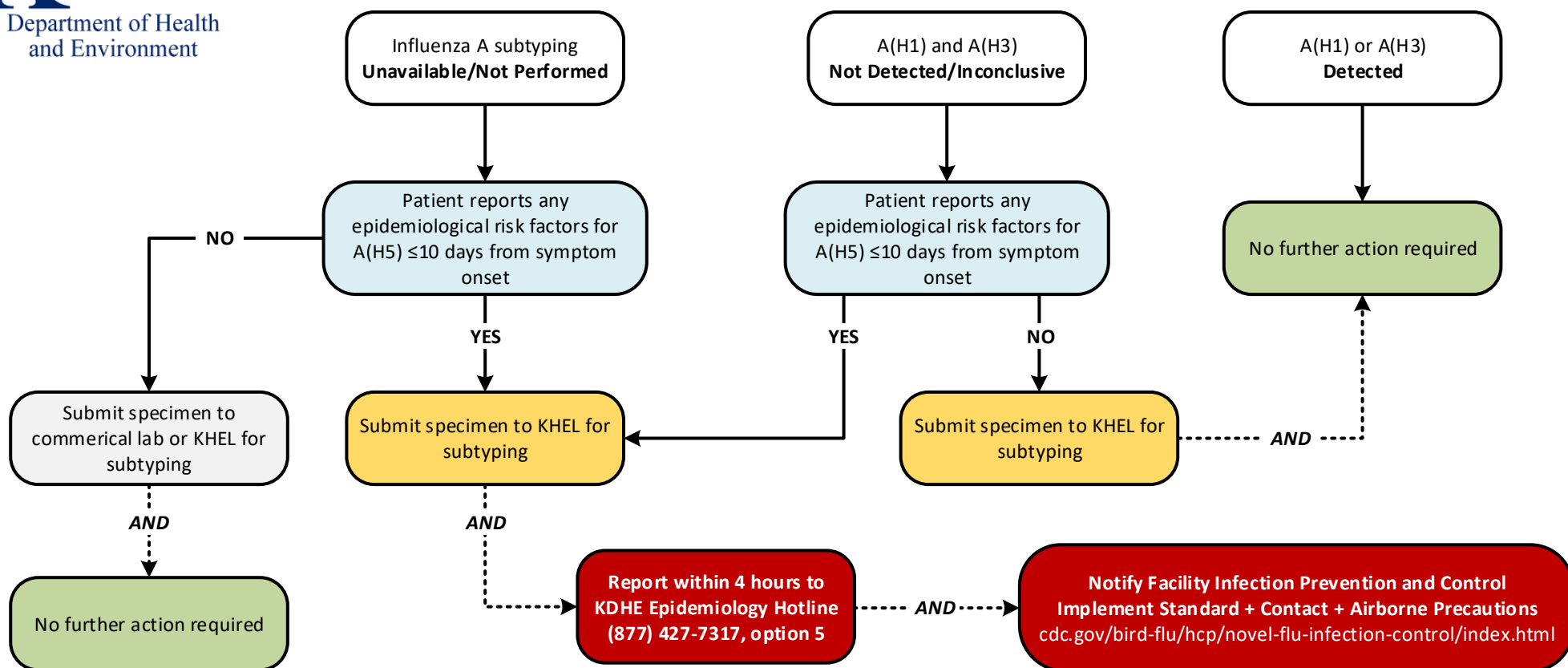


Recommendations for Subtyping Influenza A Specimens From *Hospitalized* Patients

Last updated: December 8, 2025 | Available online at kdhe.ks.gov/FluSurveillance



Epidemiological Risk Factors for Influenza A(H5)

- 1. Close contact or exposure** to infected birds, dairy cattle, or other animals. Exposure can be defined as handling, slaughtering, defeathering, butchering, culling, preparing birds or other animals for consumption, consuming raw milk or dairy products, or contact with backyard flocks with suspected or confirmed A(H5).
- 2. Direct contact with surfaces contaminated** with feces, raw cow milk, raw dairy products, raw pet/animal food products, carcasses, or internal organs from infected birds or animals.
- 3. Visiting live bird markets** where A(H5) infections have been confirmed in birds or linked to human cases.
- 4. Exposure to confirmed or suspect case** of A(H5).

Kansas Health and Environment Laboratories (KHEL) Submission Guidance

Specimen Sources: Nasopharyngeal, nasal, oropharyngeal, or conjunctival swabs in a minimum of 1 mL of viral transport media.

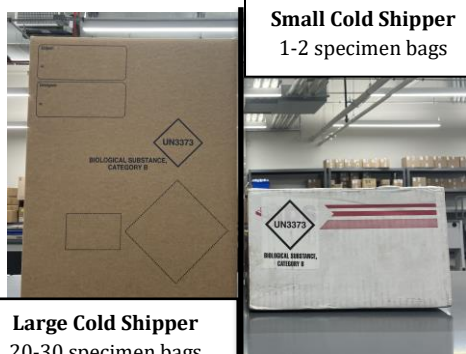
Storage/Transport: Specimens must be maintained and received between 2-8°C (or -70°C if frozen).

Specimen Stability: Must be received within 72 hours of collection with frozen ice packs to ensure temperature stability at 2-8°C. Note: If specimen will arrive at KHEL after 72 hours of collection you should freeze at -70°C and ship with dry ice to remain frozen at -70°C for valid subtype testing. Document when frozen and indicate "FROZEN" on external packaging.

Questions? Contact KHEL Customer Service during normal business hours by emailing kdhe.khel_help@ks.gov or call (785) 296-1620.

Kansas Health and Environment Laboratories

Refrigerated Category B Specimen Shipping Guide (UN3373)



Small Cold Shipper
1-2 specimen bags

Large Cold Shipper
20-30 specimen bags

Supplies needed:

1. Adequately sized insulated shipper labeled Category B (UN3373)
2. A minimum of four frozen solid ice packs
3. Packing material if applicable
4. A refrigerator with a temperature measured between 2-8c
5. A reliable plan for overnight shipping

To confirm temperature requirements, refer to Lab Quick Reference guide at <http://kdhe.ks.gov/Labs> (or scan the QR code) →



KHEL Website

Specimen Handling:

1. Confirm all specimen tubes are properly labeled
2. Package all specimens for a single patient into the zip portion of a specimen transport bag
 - Ensure adequate absorbent material is present inside the bag
3. Enclose the submission form in the side pouch
 - Form should be separate from the specimens
4. Specimens should be stored in refrigerator until ready for shipping

Cooler Packing:

1. Line the bottom of the cooler with frozen ice packs
2. Lay the specimen bags flat on top
 - a. Leave 1-2" of space
3. Add additional frozen ice packs to fully enclose specimens
4. Add packing material to secure contents if needed



Order KHEL Supplies

Shipping:

1. Tape box shut
2. Ship via courier or overnight FedEx/UPS
 - a. If shipping via courier, ensure your facility information is listed clearly on the exterior packing
 - b. We will return the empty cooler upon receipt



KDHE Courier Route
Directory

Final Checklist:

- ✓ Specimen tubes sealed and clearly labeled?
- ✓ Submission form completed and enclosed in each bag?
- ✓ Adequate absorbent material in each bag?
- ✓ Specimens sandwiched between frozen ice packs?
- ✓ UN3373 label clearly visible on the outer box?

Ship to:

Kansas Health and Environment Laboratories
1115 SW Harrison St
Topeka, KS 66612

Or via KDHE courier