

Influenza is a common and highly contagious respiratory infection that affects millions of people each year, according to the CDC. Prepared physicians can better protect their patients with help from rapid point-of-care influenza tests that aid in the diagnosis and qualitative detection of Influenza Type A and B antigens.

DIAGNOSING INFLUENZA: IMPROVING CARE THROUGH EARLY DETECTION

WHAT

The flu is associated with more than 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths annually in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). When combined with pneumonia, it is the fifth leading cause of death in older adults in the U.S.¹

WHEN

Flu season typically runs from November through April, with an incubation period of 1 to 4 days before enough virus exists to cause clinical symptoms. Most adults can spread the flu virus a full day before symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick, the CDC reports.

THE COST

Every year millions of Americans contract the flu. In addition to the amount of workdays lost, an estimated \$4.6 billion is spent each year on influenza-related medical costs. A severe influenza epidemic is estimated by some to cost more than \$12 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity.²

THE CHALLENGE

The ability to diagnose influenza rapidly and accurately is a vital necessity. Today's rapid tests effectively differentiate between Type A and Type B influenza—helping to establish a reliable starting point in managing patient care.

HELP FOR CLINICIANS

Early diagnosis of influenza may help reduce its spread. CDC reports show timely detection also stems inappropriate use of antibiotics and provides clinicians with antiviral therapy options.

Point-of-care influenza testing is becoming a valuable tool used to help guide treatment decisions and assist in clinical judgment. CLIA-waived flu tests offer reliable accuracy, minimal staff time, and can efficiently detect the presence of Influenza A and B.

AT RISK

People age 65 and older account for more than 90% of influenza-related deaths in the United States.³ The CDC reports that other individuals with a high risk of contracting influenza include:

- Children who are 6-23 months old
- Adults age 50 and older [Nearly one-third of adults ages 50 to 64 have medical conditions that put them at increased risk of serious flu complications.]
- People with chronic heart, lung, or kidney disease, diabetes, immunosuppression, or severe forms of anemia
- Nursing home and chronic care facility residents
- Women who are more than three months pregnant during flu season
- Children and teens receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- People who live or work with high-risk patients
- Healthcare workers, nursing home employees, and staff at chronic care facilities.

SOLUTIONS

Antiviral drugs that decrease the severity and duration of flu symptoms are most effective when administered within 48 hours of the first symptoms.⁴



This makes a rapid and accurate flu diagnosis paramount. Point-of-care (POC) lateral flow immunodiagnostic tests can detect the presence of Influenza A or B virus from nasal swab, nasal wash or aspirate, and nasopharyngeal swab samples.

THE BENEFITS

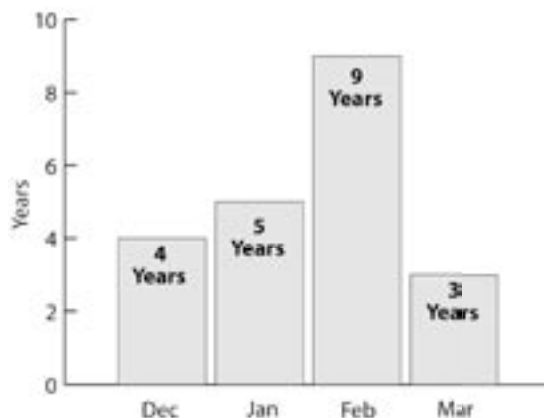
With reliable sensitivity, specificity, and fewer steps, these patient-friendly tests offer a variety of benefits to physicians seeking to provide the best care during a busy flu season.

- The tests are quick and painless, producing results in about 10 minutes with minimal hands-on time
- Fewer procedural steps (generally about 3) reduce the risk of error and minimize staff time
- Many come in self-contained kits, have a long shelf life, and include internal controls to ensure test integrity
- One test can differentiate between Influenza A and B
- Most Influenza A and B tests are CLIA-waived, making them easy to use
- Accurate diagnosis of influenza can save on prescription drug costs and related healthcare expenses.

Common flu symptoms include:

- ✓ Body aches
- ✓ Chills
- ✓ Dry cough
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Headache
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Stuffy nose
- ✓ Fatigue

Peak Months for Flu Activity Over the past 21 years



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip> or (800) 232-2522

The Food & Drug Administration at <http://www.fda.gov> or (888) 463-6332

The American Lung Association at <http://www.lungusa.org> or (212) 315-8700

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid at <http://www.cms.bhs.gov> or <http://new.cms.bhs.gov/MedlearnMattersArticles/downloads/SE0580.pdf> or (877) 267-2323

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Medicare Preventive Services-Influenza/ Pneumococcal Campaign. <http://www.cms.bhs.gov/preventiveservices/2.asp>. Last modified Sept. 29, 2005.

2. National Institutes of Health: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, News Release: "Nasal Spray Vaccine Prevents Both the Flu and Flu-Related Earaches." May 13, 1998.

3. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, News Release: "CMS Will Require Nursing Homes To Vaccinate Residents Against the Flu." Oct. 7, 2005.

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Immunization Program, "Prevention and Control of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases in Long-Term Care Facilities." <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/long-term-care.pdf>. Nov. 29, 2005

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