

National Jewish Health Offering H1N1 Diagnostic Test

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DENVER —

THIS TEST IS NO LONGER BEING OFFERED AS OF AUGUST 2010.

National Jewish Health is now offering a molecular test for the pandemic 2009 H1N1 influenza A virus (H1N1/09), that provides results within 24 hours. The test, offered by the Advanced Diagnostic Laboratories (ADx) at National Jewish Health, makes H1N1/09 testing broadly available to physicians and their patients. It can help physicians determine appropriate treatment for their patients and provide peace of mind for patients who want to know if they have the H1N1/09, or "swine," flu.

The test offered by ADx detects all influenza A strains, including the two seasonal varieties now circulating, and specifically detects the H1N1/09 virus with real-time PCR technology. It is highly sensitive; results agree 98 percent of the time with the molecular test developed by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Test results are available 24 hours after receipt, except on weekends. Cost for the test is \$147.

"The advantage of the ADx test is that it can give you a diagnosis of flu relatively quickly, whereas the currently available rapid test is insensitive, and the cultured test takes several days," said Chris Czaja, MD, Infection Control Officer at National Jewish Health. "Testing is especially helpful for patients with influenza-like illness who are hospitalized, have a high risk of complications, and for whom the diagnosis is in question."

Testing can help a physician decide whether to administer antiviral therapy to a patient or to high-risk contacts.

The vast majority of influenza cases currently being seen are H1N1/09, but seasonal flu will likely overlap with the H1N1/09 cases in the coming months. H1N1/09 is sensitive to the antiviral medication oseltamivir (Tamiflu), while the seasonal flu strain has developed resistance.

"Once we start seeing cases of seasonal influenza as well as H1N1/09, this test will be vital in determining how to treat at-risk patients, such as those with asthma," said Erwin Gelfand, Chairman of Pediatrics at National Jewish Health.

The test is available to physicians and patients through an Emergency Use Authorization by the US Food and Drug Administration. National Jewish Health ADx has licensed the test from a national reference laboratory and validated the accurate performance of the test.

Patients are encouraged to talk with their physicians if they are interested in the test. For more information please visit NJLabs.org.

Physicians looking to order the test can call 800-550-6227 or 303-270-2603.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 120 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the media resources page.

Media Contacts

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