Algorithm to assist in decisions on testing and treatment for H1N1 (swine flu) Virus in Arizona

Patient presents with:

- Fever >37.8°C (100° F) AND
- Respiratory symptoms (may include cough, sore throat, etc.) OR
- Sepsis-like syndrome¹

Yes

Implement appropriate infection control measures ²

No influenza testing recommended. Additional workup and follow-up as clinically indicated.

No

Yes

Do patient’s symptoms indicate a need for hospitalization after initial evaluation and treatment?

No

Obtain any of the following: nasopharyngeal swab; nasal aspirate; nasal swab plus throat swab; or nasal wash³

- Store in refrigerator while awaiting transport (do not freeze)
- Send to state public health laboratory for RT-PCR testing⁴
- Write “hospitalized” on State Lab form

- Recommend early antiviral treatment with oseltamivir or zanamivir if patient is severely ill or at high risk for complications ⁵,⁶
- Use clinical judgment to decide whether additional antibacterial therapy is needed⁷

¹) If patient is at high risk for complications,⁵,⁶ recommend early treatment with antiviral agents and consider routine influenza testing through clinician’s reference laboratory.⁶

²) If patient is not in high risk group, use physician discretion for treatment.⁶

3) Consider additional work-up for other respiratory conditions and co-infections if warranted.

4) Patient should:
- Stay home until symptoms resolve
- Use hand, respiratory and cough hygiene
- Seek emergency medical care if warranted

Note: Specimens from non-hospitalized patients should NOT be sent to the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory.

1. As with seasonal influenza, infants, adults ≥65 years-old, and persons with compromised immune systems may have atypical presentations.
3. Information from CDC on infection control can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm
4. Nasal washes require appropriate personal protective equipment. See: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm
5. Real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) is the preferred laboratory test for identifying H1N1 (swine flu) virus. Rapid antigen tests and immunofluorescence tests have unknown sensitivity and specificity to detect H1N1 (swine flu) virus. For more information, please see http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/specimencollection.htm
6. Information on use of antiviral agents can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm
7. Interim guidance for clinicians is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/identifyingpatients.htm

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