

Influenza

Influenza viruses belong to orthomyxoviruses (RNA viruses) and are divided into three groups: A, B and C. The transmission in humans occurs through aerosols and appears clinically after an incubation period of 1-5 days for type A and B as “cold disease” with the symptoms fever, cold, headache, joint pain, coughing, etc. Among infants and newborn, serious clinical pictures can be observed with pulmonary and cardiac participation. Otitis media, sinusitis, tracheitis and pneumonia can appear as complications. Moreover, myositis, myocarditis, CNS infections (postinfluenza encephalitis) are observed in influenza infections. Type C infections usually proceed subclinically. Type A/B antibodies can be detected serologically using a fast test. In order to specifically detect type A (also detecting ‘bird flu’, we recommend performing PCR. See also Parainfluenza virus Vaccination: recommended, however the viruses change their genetic material (antigen shift, antigen drift). Therefore vaccination can protect against already known influenza types, but not against newly occurring subtypes or mutants.

The following tests are available:

- **Influenza virus A (PCR)**

Indication: Suspicion of acute influenza A

Material: swab, BAL, CSF

TAT: 5-7 days*

Method: PCR

Units: qualitative

Ref.- range: negative

- **Influenza virus B (PCR)**

Indication: Suspicion of acute influenza B

Material: swab, BAL, CSF

TAT: 5-7 days*

Method PCR

Units: qualitative

Ref.- range: negative

- **Influenza A subtype H1N1 RNA (porcine flu, swine flu) Available only if Influenza A PCR is positive.**

- **Influenza A IgA antibodies**

Material: 1 ml serum

TAT: 7-10 days*

Method: EIA

Units: index

Ref.- range: see report

- **Influenza A IgG antibodies**

Material: 1 ml serum

TAT: 7-10 days*

Method: EIA

Units: index

Ref.- range: see report

- **Influenza B IgA antibodies**

Material: 1 ml serum

TAT: 7-10 days*

Method: EIA

Units: index

Ref.- range: see report

- **Influenza B IgG antibodies**

Material: 1 ml serum

TAT: 7-10 days*

Method: EIA

Units: index

Ref.- range: see report

- **Influenza A Ag[^]**

Material: dry swab

TAT: same day

Method: IA

Units: qualitative

Ref.- range: negative

- **Influenza B Ag[^]**

Material: dry swab

TAT: same day

Method: IA

Units: qualitative

Ref.- range: negative

For complete list of laboratory test offered at Freiburg Medical Laboratory, please visit
<http://www.fml-dubai.com/parameter-listings/>