Submission Requirements

1. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs on wooden shafts.
2. For swabs that are placed in M4-RT transport tube provided in kit or equivalent viral transport medium: DO NOT REMOVE SWAB.
3. Refrigerate all specimens at 2-8°C immediately after collection. DO NOT FREEZE.
4. Wrap the specimen in absorbent material, and place into a biohazard bag.
5. Only one specimen per biohazard bag.
6. Label each specimen with the patient name or unique identifier. UNLABELLED SPECIMENS WILL NOT BE TESTED
7. A completed Viral and Bacterial PCR and DFA Test Request Form must accompany the specimen.

Specimen Collection and Handling

1. Viral specimens may be collected using the SHL Virus Isolation and Detection Kit (contains M4 viral transport medium and swabs).
2. Pertussis (aka whooping cough) testing: see Bordetella pertussis instructions.
3. Lesion Swab (HSV or HSV/ VZV DFA): A vesicle or pustule is unroofed using a sterile beveled hypodermic needle. Using a polyester swab moistened with transport medium, scrub the base of the opened lesion with sufficient vigor to ensure that cells are collected on the swab. Avoid blood contamination.
4. Ocular/ Conjunctiva Swab (HSV PCR): Swab lower conjunctiva with flexible, fine-shafted swab pre-moistened with sterile saline.
5. Influenza PCR Preferred Specimens. Specimens for influenza testing should be collected within three days of onset of symptoms.
   a. Combination Swabs (Throat and Nasal) (Influenza PCR): Obtain throat swab and nasal swab as described directly below, and place both swabs in one tube containing M4-RT transport medium.
   b. Nasopharyngeal Swab (Influenza, Mycoplasma pneumoniae, Chlamydophila (Chlamydia) pneumonia PCR): Insert swab through the nostril into the nasopharynx until tip reaches distance equivalent to that from the ear to the nostril of the patient. Rotate swab several times, remove, and place swab in M4-RT transport medium.
6. Throat Swab (Acceptable for Influenza PCR): Rub the tonsils and posterior pharynx with Dacron-tipped plastic swab. Place the swab in tube containing M4 transport medium provided.
7. Nasal Swab (Acceptable for Influenza PCR): Place Dacron-tipped swab in each nostril and allow remaining in place for several seconds. Place the swabs in tube containing M4 transport medium provided.
8. Sputum (Legionella pneumophila, Mycoplasma pneumoniae, Chlamydophila (Chlamydia) pneumonia PCR): If possible, have the patient rinse mouth and gargle with water prior to sputum collection. An early morning specimen is best. Instruct the patient not to expectorate saliva or postnasal discharge into container. Collect specimen resulting from deep cough in sterile screw-cap container. Satisfactory quality implies the presence of mucoid or mucopurulent material and is of greater significance than volume. Ideally, a sputum specimen should have a volume of 3-5ml, although smaller quantities are acceptable if the quality is satisfactory. Stool (Norovirus PCR): Place 2-4 grams (the size of a navy bean) into a sterile container. Stool in Enteric Transport Medium is also acceptable.

Revision 03/01/2015

http://www.shl.uiowa.edu
Specimen Collection and Handling, continued

9. **Buccal swab** (Mumps PCR): Swab the buccal cavity (the space between the cheek and teeth). The parotid duct drains in this space near the upper molars. Massage the parotid gland area just in front of the ear and near the angle of the jaw for 30 seconds prior to collecting secretions on the swab. Swab the area between the cheek and gum by sweeping the swab near the upper molar to the lower molar area. Place swab in M4 viral transport medium and do not remove swab.

10. **CSF** (HSV/Enterovirus PCR): Collect and ship in sterile container (200μl minimum volume).

Test Request Form

1. Complete **Viral and Bacterial PCR and DFA Test Request Form**, including all patient identifiers, by going online to: [http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml](http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml).

2. Testing is dependent upon complete and accurate information; therefore, results may be delayed if information is not provided.
   a. Specimen type and date of specimen collection
   b. Mark the desired test (all that apply).
   c. Date of symptom onset
   d. Clinical diagnosis

Shipping Instructions

1. Include completed Viral and Bacterial PCR and DFA Test Request Form in outside pocket of biohazard bag.

2. Place specimen and absorbent material in biohazard bag (one specimen per biohazard bag).

3. Send specimens refrigerated, using cold packs. DO NOT USE WET ICE.

4. Ship multiple specimens in packaging compliant with USPS or IATA regulations.

Contact Information

1. For test request forms go online to [http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml](http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/formgenerator.xml) or call the SHL Coralville Lab at (319) 335-4500

2. Clinical Test Menu [http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/clinicaltestmenu.xml](http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/testmenu/clinicaltestmenu.xml)

3. For Viral and Bacterial PCR & DFA testing questions: (319) 335-4376