

**H1N1 Rapid Influenza Testing
Information for Healthcare Providers
Michigan Department of Community Health
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Rapid Influenza Detection Tests (RIDT) are often used in the clinical setting to screen for Season flu and guide the use of antiviral therapy. During the spring outbreak of novel H1N1 (sometimes referred to as “swine flu” in the media) the RIDT was also used without good data on the usefulness of this screening test.

We now have good information that the RIDT test is not a good screening test for novel H1N1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently released a report in the August 7 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR. 58(30);826-9) highlighting this point. The report indicated that the RIDT only detected novel H1N1 at high viral titers with the overall sensitivity being 40%-69%. Even for Seasonal influenza the sensitivity of the RIDT is modest. Sensitivity testing results are in the 60 – 80% range for seasonal influenza A (H1N1) and 80 – 83% range for seasonal influenza A(H3N2).

Health care providers who diagnose and treat influenza patients must be cognizant of the fact that a negative RIDT result does NOT rule out influenza infection with the novel H1N1 virus and is not a good screening test for this virus.

Remember the RIDT does not differentiate between subtypes of influenza A and some types of RIDT in use do not detect influenza B virus.

Further guidance and information regarding seasonal and novel H1N1 influenza can be found at the following web sites www.flu.gov , www.cdc.gov/flu, and www.michigan.gov/flu.