



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

BUREAU OF LABORATORIES

www.statelab.idaho.gov

IDAHO SENTINEL LABORATORY NETWORK LAB UPDATE

July 18, 2016

CDC BEST PRACTICES FOR PCR MENINGITIS DIAGNOSIS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released best practice guidance for clinical laboratories using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for the diagnosis of invasive *Haemophilus influenzae* (Hi) or *Neisseria meningitidis* (Nm). This guidance was released after CDC became aware of recent instances in which it was not possible to determine whether cases of meningitis were part of a cluster due to the lack of serogroup data, hampering public health efforts to control possible outbreaks of the disease.

Many sites within the Idaho Sentinel Laboratory Network are adopting commercial molecular diagnostics such as the BioFire Film Array or ARUP PCR products. These products enable the rapid detection of Hi and Nm genes but do not provide information about the serotype of the agent, which is critical for public health investigation and response.

Idaho Bureau of Laboratories is requesting laboratories using PCR for the diagnosis of Hi and Nm to:

1. select assays capable of detecting and differentiating all Hi serotypes (serotypes a-f) and all Nm serogroups common in the United States, or
2. **send either reactive primary specimens or isolates to our reference bacteriology laboratory** so that we may culture, confirm, and serotype them.

Refer to our online [Sampling and Submission Guide](#) (found at www.statelab.idaho.gov) for additional information.

Reference:

<http://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/laboratory/pcr-guidance-mening-hflu.html>

Message Categories

Lab Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Lab Advisory: important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Lab Update: updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.