



# INYO COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## PUBLIC HEALTH BRIEF

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### Hantavirus Testing Procedures

We are approaching the season where Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome may be suspected among patients who have had a history of exposure and clinical indication. In order to efficiently utilize the resources that are available, and to ensure that testing results are as accurate as possible, the California Department of Public Health and the Inyo County Health and Human Services Department have instituted the following recommendations:

1. All testing should be done by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL) in Richmond. Testing is now available through private commercial laboratories, but there are limited capabilities to prevent false positives or false negatives.
2. All requests must be screened and approved by the Inyo County Health Officer, Dr. James Richardson, before being sent to the VRDL. Specimens received by VRDL without prior approval will be referred back to the Inyo County Health Officer for approval.

In an attempt to improving patient care and provider decision making by shortening the timeline for receiving a definitive test result, and to use laboratory resources effectively, we are requesting healthcare providers to follow the following procedures:

1. When you have a patient with suspected HPS, **call Dr. Richardson for a clinical consultation at 760-920-0433 (24 hours/day)**.
2. If we agree that testing is indicated, fill out the HPS case report form and the CDPH VRDL submittal form as completely as possible (must be filled in electronically). Both forms can be found at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/VRDL.aspx>
3. Fax both forms to the Medical Epidemiology Liaison Section (MELS) at (510) 307-8599 AND send a copy with the specimen(s) to avoid delays in testing.
4. We strongly recommend that you also submit a respiratory specimen (nasopharyngeal swabs or washes, tracheal aspirates, bronchoalveolar lavage and/or pleural fluid) for viral isolation and/or respiratory PCR assays to test for other agents that may be causing your patient's illness.
5. See attached HPS Specimen Submittal Instructions for additional screening criteria.

Suspected HPS cases shall be faxed to the Inyo County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Division using the Confidential Morbidity Report at 760-873-7800.