



Respiratory Long-Term Care Facility Toolkit



Indiana
Department
of
Health



Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) to report your facility's respiratory outbreak. This toolkit has checklists, forms, and resources that represent IDOH's recommendations for managing a respiratory outbreak in a long-term care facility (LTCF). The contents of this toolkit are designed to simplify the complexity of managing a respiratory outbreak by providing one source for materials required to control a respiratory outbreak in a LTCF.

ADDITIONAL NOTIFICATIONS

If you have not already done so, please contact the IDOH Division of Long-Term Care to report your facility's outbreak online through the IDOH Incident Reporting System. Information for online reporting of incidents, including disease outbreaks, to IDOH can be found [here](#).

LABORATORY TESTING

Laboratory testing should occur when any resident has signs and/or symptoms that could be due to a respiratory disease, especially when two or more residents develop respiratory illness within 72 hours of each other. The local health department (LHD) or IDOH will recommend the collection of specimens, when appropriate.

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Please contact IDOH's Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Prevention Division (IDEPD) at (317) 233-7125 from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday if you have any questions. After hours or during weekends or holidays, contact the epidemiologist on-call at (317) 233-1325.

Direct Contacts

Layne Mounsey, Respiratory Epidemiologist II & Influenza Surveillance Coordinator
(LMounsey@health.in.gov or 317-495-4115)

Tiffany Robitaille, Respiratory Epidemiologist II & COVID-19 Surveillance Coordinator
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COMMUNICATION

- Inform the IDOH Long-Term Care Division of the respiratory outbreak whether there is a confirmed or suspected etiology through the [Incident Reporting System](#).
 - An outbreak is defined as at least three (3) residents with the same infection or symptoms in one defined area, such as a hall, unit, neighborhood, street, pod, secured unit, vent unit, etc. in a 48-hour period, or 10% or more of the current building census with the same infection or symptoms.
- Complete the Respiratory Outbreak Linelist.
 - Include all requested information for ill residents and staff.
- Submit the completed linelist at the end of the respiratory outbreak.
 - An outbreak is over after two (2) incubation periods have passed after the last date of symptom onset during which no new cases are detected.
 - IDOH staff will update the LTCF on the projected end date for the outbreak and give final notice for when the outbreak is deemed officially over.
 - Return the completed linelist to the individual you have been working with (i.e., the local health department, field epidemiologist, etc.) during the outbreak.
 - Completed linelists can also be faxed to IDOH at 317-234-2812 (ATTN: Tom Loftus and Layne Mounsey)

CONTROL MEASURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Post a door sign, template included, at the facility entrance to inform staff, residents, and visitors of the outbreak.
- Limit visitation and exclude ill persons from visiting the facility via posted notices mentioned above.
- All ill staff should be excluded from patient contact until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without use of fever-reducing medications, or until resolution of respiratory symptoms for at seven (7) days; whichever is longer.
- All exposed residents on units with respiratory cases (i.e., units, wards, pods, etc. that are currently impacted) should receive antiviral chemoprophylaxis as soon as outbreak is determined.

- Symptomatic residents should stay in their own rooms as much as possible, including restricting them from common activities and spaces.
 - This includes having meals served in their rooms, when possible.
- Avoid new admissions or transfers to units with symptomatic residents.
- Restrict staff movement from areas of the facility having illness to areas not affected by the outbreak.
- Administer the current season's influenza vaccine to unvaccinated residents and staff, per current vaccination recommendations.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFECTION CONTROL

- Follow standard cleaning and disinfection procedures. These procedures are adequate for most respiratory conditions environmental control in all settings within the LTCF.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

- Request specimen collection kits from your LHD or field epidemiologist.
- Collect Specimens
 - Specimens may be collected for up to three (3) to five (5) symptomatic residents and/or staff who haven't already received any antiviral therapies.
 - Label each specimen with the patient's name, date of birth and collection date.
 - Unlabeled or incorrectly labeled specimens will not be tested.
- Complete the paper specimen form for each specimen collected.
- Coordinate shipping/transportation of specimens with your LHD or field epidemiologist.
 - IDOH Lab must receive the specimens within five (5) days of collection and during normal business hours Monday through Friday, unless otherwise directed.
 - Refrigerate specimens until they are ready for transportation.
- Provide completed paper specimen forms and refrigerated specimens to your LHD or field epidemiologist upon pick-up.

IDOH Laboratory is available during a respiratory outbreak to test specimens from LTCF residents and/or staff to help determine the cause of the outbreak if the exact cause is unknown.

- Prior authorization with the influenza coordinator will need to occur before specimens can be sent to IDOH Laboratory for outbreak testing.

Once authorized, coordination with the IDOH Laboratory, field epidemiologist, influenza coordinator and the LTCF will occur to collect and transport specimens for testing to IDOH Laboratory.

Address

IDOH Laboratory
ATTN: Virology Laboratory
550 W. 16th Street, Suite B
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Influenza Testing Instructions can be found [here](#).

- These testing instructions would still be relevant if the cause of the outbreak is unknown.

Additional Tests Available at IDOH Laboratory can be found [here](#).

All specimens being tested through IDOH Laboratory must be entered into the [LimsNet System](#) prior to specimens arriving at IDOH Laboratory for testing.

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Influenza Webpage and Dashboard - IDOH](#)

[Who is at Higher Risk of Flu Complications – CDC](#)

[Interim Guidance for Influenza Outbreak Management in Long-Term Care and Post-Acute Care Facilities – CDC](#)

[Summary: Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\) - CDC](#)

[Interim Guidance for the Use of Masks to Control Seasonal Influenza Virus Transmission – CDC](#)

HANDWASHING FLYER

A printable version of the flyer below can be found [here](#).

Did you wash your hands?

Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others.



WET

Wet hands under clean, running water.



WASH

Scrub hands with soap for 20 seconds.



RINSE

Rinse hands under clean, running water.



DRY

Dry hands using a clean paper towel or air dry them.

NOTICE: PLEASE READ PRIOR TO ENTERING BUILDING

Dear residents, staff, families, and visitors:

This is to inform you that **cases of respiratory illness are occurring at this facility**. This type of illness is usually spread through direct contact from sneezing and coughing. It can also be spread through nose and throat secretions.

Common signs and symptoms of respiratory illness include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue

The best way to prevent the spread of respiratory illness is **practicing good handwashing, cough, and sneeze etiquette**. Anyone entering the facility needs to wash their hands frequently, especially upon leaving the facility. Hands should be washed for 20 seconds using soap and running water.

If you have questions, please call the _____ Health Department at _____.

COVER YOUR COUGH FLYER

Additional flu resources can be found [here](#).



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put your used tissue in the waste basket.

You can also consider wearing a high-quality, well-fitting face mask which may help reduce the spread of respiratory germs.



Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, especially after touching tissues with secretions after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

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#FIGHT FLU



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Servi
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

STAY HOME FROM WORK WHILE SICK FLYER

STOP

Feeling sick?

Stop the spread of flu in the workplace.
Stay home when you are sick.

Common Flu Signs & Symptoms Include:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills**
*It is important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.
- Sore throat**
- Runny or stuffy nose**
- Cough**
- Muscle or body aches**
- Headaches**
- Fatigue (tiredness)**

*Flu is different from a common cold.
Flu usually comes on suddenly, and in general symptoms are more intense compared to the common cold.*

If you think you may have flu tell your supervisor and stay home from work.

All employees should stay home if they are sick. CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius) is gone. Your fever should be gone without the need to use a fever-reducing medicine. If you have flu without a fever, you should stay home at least 4-5 days after the start of your symptoms.

For more information visit www.cdc.gov/flu