



# New Hampshire Health Alert Network

## Health.Alert@nh.gov

**Status:** Actual  
**Message Type:** Update #1 - NH-HAN #20120927 Pertussis  
**Severity:** Moderate  
**Sensitive:** Not Sensitive  
**Message Identifier:** NH-HAN #20120928-1 Pertussis 2012 Update #1  
**Delivery Time:** 12 hours  
**Acknowledgement:** No  
**Originating Agency:** NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services

---

**DATE:** September 28, 2012      **TIME:** 1600 EDT

**TO:** Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurses, Infection Control Practitioners, Infectious Disease Specialists, Hospital Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Laboratory Response Network, Manchester Health Department, Nashua Health Department, NHHA, NH School Nurses and Administrators, Community Health Centers, DHHS Outbreak Team, DPHS Investigation Team, Public Health Network, and DPHS Management Team

**FROM:** Elizabeth Talbot MD, Deputy State Epidemiologist

**SUBJECT:** 2012 Pertussis Update #1

### **New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS) recommends:**

- Confirm suspect pertussis by collecting the correct sample for culture and PCR as in attached document. This attached instruction is intended to replace the September 27 2012 version and be the more appropriate resource for clinicians.
- For local epidemiology, response and information about post exposure prophylaxis, treatment, and exclusion, see NH-HAN #20120927 Pertussis at :  
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/documents/pertussis-9272012.pdf>

### **NH DHHS Contact Information:**

- To obtain specimen kits for pertussis or for information on sending specimens to the state lab, contact the NH Public Health Laboratories at 603-271-4661.
- For questions regarding use of TDaP, contact the NH Immunization Program at 603-271-4482.
- To report a suspect or confirmed case of pertussis, call the NH DHHS Infectious Disease Investigation and Surveillance Sections at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345, x5300).

**Attachment:** Bordetella Pertussis Culture and PCR Specimen Collection and Transport Guidelines

**For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS Infectious Disease Investigation and Surveillance Sections at 603-271-4496. After hours or toll free (In NH) at 800-852-3345, ext. 4496 or 603-271-5300 and ask for the public health professional on call.**

---

## DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ALERTING VOCABULARY

### Message Type

Alert: Original alert  
Update: Prior alert has been updated and superseded  
Cancel: Prior alert has been cancelled  
Error: Prior alert has been retracted

### Status

Actual: Refers to a live event  
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert  
Test: Related to a technical and/or system test

### Severity

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property  
Severe: Significant threat to life or property  
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property  
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property  
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

### Sensitive

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content  
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

### Message Identifier

A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation

### Delivery Time

Indicates the time frame for the delivery of the alert

### Acknowledgement

Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the time frame in which a response is required.

### Originating Agency

A guaranteed unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

### Alerting Program

The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

**You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification database.**

**If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would prefer to be used, please contact:**

Denise M. Krol, MS  
NH HAN Coordinator  
[Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us)

**Business Hours: 8 AM – 4 PM**  
Tel: 603-271-4596  
Fax: 603-271-0545

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES  
29 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03301-6527  
Tel (603) 271-4661  
Fax (603) 271-4783

**BORDETELLA PERTUSSIS CULTURE AND PCR SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND  
TRANSPORT KIT**

**Store collection kit at refrigerator temperature (2-8°C).**

**Do not allow the medium to freeze at any time.**

Two separate tests are offered by the PHL for best detection of *B. pertussis*. Culture and PCR each have different collection requirements. Please read, and follow the instructions carefully.

Kit components for culture:

- 1 calcium alginate wire shaft swab
- 1 tube of Regan-Lowe Transport Medium

Kit components for PCR:

- 1 plastic capped tube
- 1 polyester (DACRON) wire shaft swabs

Basic kit components:

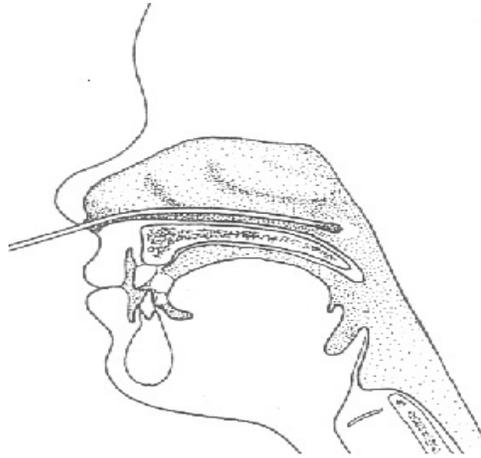
- Instruction sheet
- Laboratory test requisition
- Medium double Mailer

Procedure for collection:

1. Remove the contents of the kit from the refrigerator. Verify that the Regan-Lowe transport tube has not expired. Specimens received in expired media must be rejected. Allow the media to warm to room temperature (at least 15 minutes) before collecting specimen.
2. Label the clear plastic tube and Regan-Lowe medium with patient name, and the date of collection.
3. Fill out the requisition form completely and legibly.
4. *For collection of specimen for culture:*

With the patient's neck in an extended position, gently insert a sterile calcium alginate swab into the right nostril. Pass the swab along the floor of the nose until it contacts the posterior nasopharyngeal wall and gently rotate for 5 seconds to absorb

secretions. Remove the swab and place it in the Regan-Lowe tube immersing the swab tip completely in the medium. Cap the tube.



5. *For collection of specimen for PCR:*

Repeat step 4 using a polyester swab in the Left nostril. Remove the swab and place it into the plastic tube. Cap the tube.

6. Place plastic tube and the Regan-Lowe tube with swabs into the cylindrical aluminum inner liner and cap the liner. Wrap the completed requisition around the outside of the inner liner and place it inside the mailing container. Cap the mailing container.
7. To expedite diagnosis, transport to the laboratory promptly. The sample must reach the PHL within 3 days of collection for effective *B. pertussis* detection.
8. If the specimen must be held prior to shipment, the specimen should be stored as follows:
  - a) Refrigerate PCR tube with swab until shipment.
  - b) If transport will be within 24 hours of collection, store Regan-Lowe at room temperature (20-25° C) until shipment.
  - c) If transport will be within 48-72 hours of collection, incubate Regan-Lowe only, at 34-37° C until shipment. If an incubator is not available, refrigerate at 2-8° C until shipment.

If you have any questions, please call the Public Health Laboratories at 603-271-4663.