



November 21, 2023

To All Oregon Hospital Laboratories,

The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) wishes to clarify the appropriate procedures for obtaining testing for *Clostridium botulinum* (botulism) testing through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). OSPHL does not perform this testing and specimens should not be sent to OSPHL. All specimens should be sent directly to CDC following clinical consultation with an Oregon Health Authority (OHA) medical epidemiologist and approval for testing.

Please adapt your laboratory's instructions to align with the procedures detailed below. OSPHL's Lab Test Menu has been updated to align with these instructions and is available at www.healthoregon.org/labtests.

If you have a patient presenting with symptoms of botulism and would like to obtain laboratory testing, please complete the following steps:

1. The treating clinician must first contact OHA's 24/7 Epidemiologist On-Call at 971-673-1111 for a clinical consultation. Suspect cases of botulism are immediately reportable to public health.
2. If OHA provides approval for testing, collect and store specimens in accordance with the [CDC instructions for Botulism Confirmation Testing](#).
3. Ship **all specimens** directly to the **CDC laboratory** detailed on the [Botulism Confirmation Testing Instructions](#).
4. All details on the CDC instructions for Botulism Confirmation Testing must be followed. To avoid common submission errors, we are providing the following key reminders:
 - a. **Stool** specimens must be collected, transported, and received at CDC **within 72 hours of collection**.
 - b. **Serum** specimens must be collected **before initiation of antitoxin** in adults.
 - c. Ensure specimens are packaged to maintain **refrigerated temperatures** until receipt at the CDC laboratory. (CDC checks the actual temperature inside shipping containers upon receipt.)
 - d. CDC accepts deliveries Monday-Friday, except holidays.
 - e. All specimens must be labeled with at least two unique patient identifiers also on the specimen submission form.
 - f. All specimens must be accompanied by a completed [CDC 50.34 Specimen Submission Form](#)¹.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/form.html>

5. Fax a copy of the following to OSPHL at 503-693-5604 and indicate that specimens are being sent directly to CDC. This will ensure you receive test results.
 - a. A completed OSPHL General Microbiology Test Request Form, available at www.bitly.com/phl-forms.
 - b. A copy of the CDC 50.34 Specimen Submission Form (linked above).

6. Turnaround time for results is up to 12 weeks.
 - a. Preliminary results may be available as soon as 48 hours after CDC receives the specimens.
 - b. CDC will provide results directly to OSPHL. OSPHL will forward results to the facility on record.

For questions, please contact our subject matter experts:

- Laboratory: Marianna Martinez, Microbiologist – 503-693-4143 or marianna.e.martinez@oha.oregon.gov
- Clinical or Epidemiological: Melissa Sutton, Public Health Physician – 503-871-9772 or melissa.sutton@oha.oregon.gov

We appreciate your ongoing collaboration and thank you for your attention to these details to best serve our mutual patients.

Sincerely,

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