



March 6, 2018

Dear OSPHL Clients,

This letter serves as notice that the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) is simplifying its specimen acceptance criteria for *Bordetella* species testing, one of which causes whooping cough. These changes are effective beginning March 19, 2018.

What is changing?

Only one swab will be needed to perform both culture and PCR. Two specimen collections will no longer be needed.

What do I need to do?

Specimen Collection

Only one specimen collection is needed. Collect a nasopharyngeal (NP) specimen using a Dacron tip swab on a flexible wire shaft and submit in Regan-Lowe transport media. This media is included in specimen collection kits provided by the OSPHL.

Do Not Submit swabs in dry plastic tubes. They will not be accepted for testing starting in April 2018.

Additional specimen sources are acceptable but not preferred. Complete specimen acceptance criteria are available on our Lab Test Menu at www.healthoregon.org/labtests.

Completing Test Request Forms

The OSPHL is revising its Test Request Form. The next version will contain a single order choice for both *Bordetella* culture and PCR.

In the interim, please check both culture and PCR when submitting the specimen for *Bordetella* testing, as shown in the example below.

ADDITIONAL TESTING	
Pertussis (<i>Bordetella</i> spp.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture (BORC) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PCR (BORPCR)

What is not changing?

- Collect the specimen as soon as possible after symptoms develop, but no later than three weeks after illness onset, and before antibiotics are started.

- Store specimens in Regan-Lowe transport media at refrigerated temperatures pending transport.
- Transport specimens at refrigerated temperatures for receipt at the OSPHL within 3 calendar days of specimen collection.

Complete specimen acceptance criteria are always available on our Lab Test Menu at www.healthoregon.org/labtests.

Pertussis Resources

The Oregon pertussis data show that the vaccine still works, is associated with milder disease and that vaccinating pregnant women in the third trimester is an effective way to protect babies during the first 2 months of life.

For more information, we have provided the following resources:

- [Pertussis vaccine performance in an epidemic year](#)
- [Vaccinated children and adolescents with pertussis infections experience reduced illness severity and duration](#)
- [Impact of the US Maternal Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Acellular Pertussis Vaccination Program on Preventing Pertussis in Infants <2 Months of Age](#)
- [Pertactin-negative Bordetella pertussis strains: evidence for a possible selective advantage](#)
- [Oregon Public Health Division Pertussis Information Page](#)

For questions about specimen collection or transport, please contact Sarah Humphrey, OSPHL Client Services Coordinator, at sarah.m.humphrey@state.or.us or 503-693-4124.

Sincerely,

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