

<p style="text-align: center;">Instructions for Submitting Laboratory Specimens to DOH Tampa Laboratory (DOH TL) for West Nile Virus Testing</p>

ALWAYS: 1) Notify DOH TL staff (Dr. Stark or Dr. Kazanis) in advance of an impending shipment (telephone 813-974-8000) and 2) Submit the specimen with a completed laboratory submission form.

General Shipping Instructions:

All shippers should adhere to International Air Transport Association regulations (<http://www.iata.org>).

Specimens should be shipped by overnight courier to **arrive** at DOH TL on Monday-Friday. Do not ship specimens on Friday unless special arrangements have been made.

Shipping address: DOH Tampa Laboratory
3602 Spectrum Blvd.,
Tampa, FL 33612
ATTENTION: Arbovirus Diagnostic Laboratory (tel. 813-974-5990)

Shipping containers: Use only durable containers. Seal specimen containers tightly. Wrap specimen containers in absorbent material and pack them into a leakproof container. Then pack the container in a styrofoam cooler. Specimens for virus isolation must be sent with enough dry ice to insure that they remain frozen until receipt. Specimens for serologic testing can be shipped with frozen gel-ice. Hand-carrying specimens is not recommended but if specimens are hand-carried, the above packing instructions are applicable.

Minimal Information to Accompany Specimens Shipped to DOH TL

Complete "Arbovirus Surveillance: Virus Isolation" form

Tubes, cryovials, and other specimen containers should be clearly labeled with – at minimum – the patient's name (human) or species of animal, date of collection, and specimen type.

Special Collection, Shipping, and Handling Instructions:

Mosquitoes (see additional protocol):

Live-caught females, pooled by species on cold table after anesthesia (CO₂). Freeze pools at -70°C. Ship on dry ice. Provide each pool with a unique identifier (UID) and list on sample submission sheet.

Serum:

Ship a minimum of 0.5 mL per specimen. The tube must be labeled to relate with the submission sheet.

CSF:

Ship at least 1.0 mL per specimen. The tube must be labeled to relate with the submission sheet.

Whole blood:

In general, send only if requested for virus isolation attempts in fatal cases (heart blood).

Human tissues:

In suspected cases of arboviral encephalitis in which an autopsy is performed, the DOH Tampa laboratory can test: fresh-frozen tissues, including brain (multiple areas of cortex, midbrain, and brainstem), other solid organs (liver, spleen, heart, kidney, etc.); CSF (collected from ventricles); and heart blood (for virus isolation attempts).

Place each tissue type in a separate labeled container or bag before freezing.

Veterinary tissues:

In suspected cases of arboviral encephalitis in which a necropsy is performed, the DOH Tampa laboratory can test: fresh-frozen tissues, including brain (multiple areas of cortex, midbrain, and brainstem), other solid organs (liver, spleen, heart, kidney, etc.); CSF (collected from ventricles); and heart blood (for virus isolation attempts).

Place each tissue type in a separate labeled container or bag before freezing

Avian tissues:

Submit fresh-frozen brain, heart, kidney, and spleen samples.

Place each tissue type in a separate labeled container or bag before freezing