**Specimen types, storage and shipping conditions:**

- General test kits are available from HETL for PCR, Viral Culture, Serology and Mycobacteriology.
- Specific test kits are available for **Blood Lead**, **Bordetella species PCR**, including **B. pertussis**, **Chlamydia/Gonorrhea** amplified probe tests, and **Quantiferon®-TB Gold Plus test**.
- Specific instructions for specimen collection are available at [www.maine.publichealth.gov/lab](http://www.maine.publichealth.gov/lab).
- Test kits include sampling materials and instructions as well as packing materials and shipping containers for couriers or US Mail.
- To order test kits please call 207-287-2727 or fax order to 207-287-8925.

### ARBOVIRUS TESTING

**ALL** specimens submitted for Arboviral testing must be accompanied by the Arboviral Submission Form before testing will be performed.

### PCR/VIRAL CULTURE

- Collect specimens promptly (ideally within 1-3 days of onset).
- Use polyester/Dacron swabs and viral transport medium (VTM) – **No wooden shaft**.
- Urine or stool specimens: Send in sterile, leak proof containers. Small amount of stool (pea sized) can also be added to VTM.
- Store specimens at refrigerator temp. and ship on frozen gel packs.

**Viral Culture Reflex Test for PCR:**

- If selected PCR test is negative, routine culture will be performed to detect other viruses. Confirmation will be charged accordingly.
- Minimum of 1.0mL of spinal fluid is required to perform PCR and viral culture.

### SEROLOGY

Blood should be collected without anticoagulants or preservatives:

- 5mL for an adult or 3mL for pediatric patients if sufficient volume.
- Do not freeze blood specimens.
- It is best to physically separate serum from the blood clot within 24 hours or centrifuge in serum separator tube prior to submission.
- HIV-1/HIV-2 confirmation is automatically ordered for HIV+ screen and will be billed accordingly.
- Use only HETL kits to collect specimens for **Quantiferon®-TB Gold Plus** (QFT-Plus test).

### BACTERIOLOGY

- **Chlamydia/Gonorrhea** amplified probe tests REQUIRE GenProbe collection tubes (available from HETL – call 207-287-2727).
- Shiga toxin positive broths should be sent for confirmation and serotyping.
- Pertussis PCR swabs should be dry.
- Isolates sent for identification should include prior lab results.

### BLOOD LEAD

Minimum of 300mL whole blood.
- Heparin (green top) or EDTA (purple top) tubes are acceptable.
- Sodium Citrate (light blue top) is NOT acceptable.
- Capillary specimens with high levels will require venous confirmation.
- Check **No Insurance** box ONLY if patient does not have insurance or MaineCare to cover blood lead testing.

### MYCOBACTERIÖLOGY

- 5mL is the recommended minimum sample volume for AFB recovery.
- Respiratory specimens and other body fluids - collect in sterile container.
- Bone marrow and blood - collect in heparin (green top) tube.
- Tissue biopsy and bone - collect in sterile container with 1-2mL distilled H2O or saline.
- Gastric aspirate - neutralize 5-10mL with sodium carbonate within 1 hour of collection.

### CSF PANEL

- Minimum of 1.5mL of spinal fluid is required to perform CSF Panel and reflex to Arbovirus Panel if all PCR tests are negative.