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**Date:** March 31, 2016

**To:** Wisconsin Healthcare Facilities, Local Public Health Officers, Infection Preventionists

**From:** Jeffrey P. Davis, MD, Chief Medical Officer and State Epidemiologist for Communicable Diseases

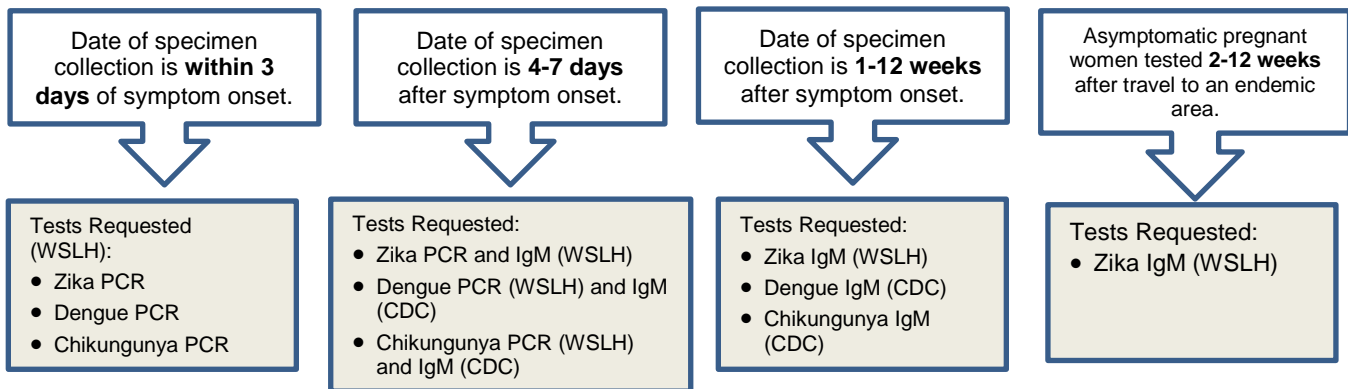
**RE:** Update on testing for Zika virus infection

I am pleased to announce that the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) can now conduct testing for Zika virus infection. The tests include polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assays for detection of Zika, dengue, and chikungunya viral nucleic acid in serum, and an IgM antigen-capture (MAC) ELISA assay for detection of Zika IgM antibody in serum. Additionally, urine specimens can now be submitted for the Zika PCR assay if they are accompanied by serum specimens. We appreciate the efforts of WSLH staff to rapidly bring these tests on board

This new capability at the WSLH should substantially decrease the turn-around time to receive test results compared with the turnaround time for specimens which previously had to be sent to the CDC. WSLH staff estimate a turnaround time of less than 7 days. Providers should be aware that specimens testing positive or equivocal for Zika virus IgM will still need to be forwarded to the CDC for confirmatory plaque-reduction neutralization (PRNT) testing because of the significant cross-reactivity between Zika and other Flaviviruses in the MAC ELISA assay. Also, requests for IgM testing for dengue and chikungunya viruses will continue to be sent to CDC.

Revised instructions for specimen collection and submission are attached to this email message and are available at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arboviral/wi-travel-related-arbo-specimen-instructions.pdf>.

**Note that Division of Public Health epidemiologists must approve all Zika virus tests.** Please call 608/267-9003 to discuss whether testing criteria are met and obtain instructions for specimen submission. Testing criteria can be found in the algorithm available at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arboviral/zika-testing-flowchart.pdf> which is also included as an attachment to this email. Because the reliability of testing is highly dependent on the timing of specimen collection, it is important to have accurate illness onset dates and dates of travel to Zika-endemic areas when calling for test approval. This diagram summarizes which tests are performed on **serum**, based on when specimen collection occurs in relation to clinical onset.



Please contact the the Bureau of Communicable Disease with any questions (608/267-9003).