



Health Protection Agency

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Dear Colleague

Further to my letter of 29th July asking for your collaboration in reporting GBS cases, I have been asked about when samples should be taken for swine flu antibody testing, how much serum should be provided, and the effect that intravenous immunoglobulin treatment might have on the test.

1. **A reminder.** Please notify every case of GBS, not just those thought to be associated with swine 'flu or vaccination.
2. **Two serum samples needed.** Dr. Hoschler of the Respiratory Virus Unit who will be carrying out the H1N1 serology tests thinks that IVIG is likely to produce non-specific cross reacting antibodies that may interfere with interpretation of the result. Ideally therefore, we require **two serum samples (minimum volume 100µL but more if available)**, the first taken after hospital admission but before starting IVIg treatment, and the second just before hospital discharge.
3. **Sending the samples.** The samples should be sent via the usual transportation mechanism set up by your hospital to the Respiratory Virus Unit at Colindale. The samples should be flagged as URGENT using the attached HPA request form. In the clinical information box clearly identify that each sample is from the **BNSU GBS Surveillance**. Also identify whether this is the first or second of the pair and, if the first, whether a second can be expected. It might be helpful if taking such samples if you forewarn you local laboratory of this surveillance.

The laboratory should send the samples with the request form to:

Dr Katja Hoschler, Respiratory Virus Unit, HPA Centre for Infections, 61 Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5EQ

With many thanks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E Miller", written over a light-colored rectangular background.

**Professor Elizabeth Miller
Immunisation Department**