October 22, 2026

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

WISCONSIN LABORATORY MESSAGE

The WI State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) Communicable Disease Division (CDD) provides laboratory updates and alerts to clinical laboratories statewide. We rely on you to share this message with colleagues at your facility.

CDD Customer Service | (800) 862-1013 | Mon – Fri | 7:45AM CT – 4:30PM CT

WSLH Emergency Pager | (608) 263-3280 | Emergencies only | 24 hours/day | 7 days/week

To update emergency contact information for your facility, please email **WCLN@slh.wisc.edu** and provide: Full Name | Title | Facility | City | Phone Number | E-mail.

WSLH Surveillance Program & Data & **WSLH Clinical Test Directory**

--- WSLH CLOSED THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY ---

WSLH will be closed on Thursday, November 26 in observance of Thanksgiving. Normal business hours will resume on Friday.

	Wednesday (November 25)	Thursday (Thanksgiving)	Friday (November 27)	Saturday (November 28)
Specimen Receiving	**6:00AM – 4:30PM**	**CLOSED**	**6:00AM – 4:30PM**	**8:00AM – 12:00PM**
Customer Service	**7:45AM – 4:30PM**	**CLOSED**	**7:45AM – 4:30PM**	**CLOSED**

Please retain specimens in your lab in temperature-controlled environments prior to shipping. Please ensure sufficient frozen packs are available to keep specimens cold during transport.

--- STATEWIDE REGIONAL MEETINGS WERE A HUGE SUCCESS ---

Last month, we wrapped up our statewide WCLN Regional Meeting Tour! It was a resounding success with overwhelming positivity and good fun. We are appreciative of all the speakers and participants that attended for sharing their time, knowledge, and laughter. If you have any ideas for future meetings that you would like to share, please reach out to the WCLN Coordinator. Our entire three-day Tour can be distilled into one succinct sentence from an attendee: *"I always learn new things – make new connections – good eats and great story sharing."* As always, thank you to everyone for your partnership in making Wisconsin healthier!

--- INFLUENZA SPECIMEN SUBMISSION REQUESTS IN FLU SEASON ---

Influenza season is on the rise earlier than usual this year. With that in mind, we have just switched to our "in-season" influenza specimen submission requests. The requests are: one influenza-related hospitalization per week AND unsubtypable influenza A positives AND influenza A positive specimens associated with international travel or bovine/swine/avian exposure. Please consult page 14 in the Laboratory-Based Surveillance Plan 2026-2027 for further details. As always, all flu data reporting should continue to be reported through the REDCap Portal.

--- REMINDER FOR MEASLES TESTING AT WSLH ---

As of October 20, 2026 the WI Department of Health Services (DHS) has confirmed 289 cases of measles in the state this year. This is already >8-times more cases than in 2025. Updated, statewide measles data is available on the DHS Dashboards. We would like to take this time to remind labs and providers that diagnostic measles testing, both PCR and IgM serology, is available for suspect patients fee-exempt at WSLH. Submitting to WSLH provides a fast local result, and helps with statewide surveillance and response. Pre-approval by DHS is not needed for measles testing, but local public health or DHS should be notified of any patients suspected of having measles, even before a test result is available. Immune status testing (IgG serology) on healthy individuals is widely available and should be performed in-house or sent to a reference laboratory, not to WSLH. As always, please continue to encourage others to participate in MMR vaccination strategies as we aim for a 95% vaccination rate.

--- REGISTRATION CLOSING VERY SOON FOR THE WMLN MEETING ---

Invited Speakers

Alicia Mooney, MS, Communicable Disease Division, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Andrea Liptack, MSN, RN, FNP-BC, Wisconsin Division of Public Health
E. Ann Misch, MD, UW-Madison School of Public Health/UW Health University Hospital
Claire Leback, MPH, BSN, RN, Wisconsin Division of Public Health
Kala Raz, MPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Madeline Topf, PhD, Communicable Disease Division, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Mary Raschka, DNP, BSN, Wisconsin Division of Public Health
Nate Simon, PhD, Communicable Disease Division, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene
Zelalem Temesgen, MD, Professor of Medicine, Mayo Clinic Center for Tuberculosis

The WSLH is hosting the in-person 2026 Wisconsin Mycobacteriology Laboratory Network (WMLN) Conference on Tuesday, November 3 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Madison East (located at 4402 E. Washington Ave, Madison, WI 53704). The panel of invited expert speakers for the conference is shown on the left.

If interested, please register for the event here:
https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8izWe1Dxi3UVAnI

Registration closes Monday, October 26. Please contact Nathan Simon with any questions.

--- PLACING CLINICAL SUPPLY ORDERS WITH CUSTOMER SERVICE ---

As a reminder, requests for test kits, mailers, and requisition forms should be directed to the Clinical Orders team at our Clinical Order Email Contact or by telephone at 800-862-1088. For additional information, please refer to our webpage. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

--- JOURNAL CLUB CORNER ---

A new commentary article by M.A. Pettengill in the *Journal of Clinical Microbiology* reflects on recent publications regarding blood culture contamination (BCC) and the use of initial specimen diversion devices to reduce BCC rates. The article encourages everyone to critically think about: 1) your local BCC rate, 2) collector education on gloving and preparation of the venipuncture site, 3) the use of ISDDs in your setting, 4) collection of blood cultures through existing lines, and 5) offering blood culture rapid diagnostic tests 24/7. There is never a better time to re-assess practices than right now.

--- CDC 50.34 SPECIMEN SUBMISSION FORM AND CSTOR UPDATES ---



Starting October 30, 2026, the CDC is retiring their *50.34 Specimen Submission Form* used for requesting testing at the CDC. The goal is to improve the specimen submission process by moving to an electronic system: the Specimen Test Order and Reporting (CSTOR) Web Portal. CDC encourages clinical labs to submit specimens through their State Lab to facilitate ordering and reporting for public health purposes. However, Clinical Labs may choose to directly submit specimens to CDC by creating their own CSTOR accounts here. Although this process is not frequently needed, one major exception is *Trichomonas* susceptibility testing, where direct submission facilitates specimen stability. Additional information about the change can be found at the following CDC link.

--- EDUCATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES REMINDERS ---



We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our expert speakers who gave presentations during our 2026 WSLH CDD Webinar Series. If you have future topics of interest, or would like to contribute to a webinar in 2027, please email the WCLN Coordinator. We are looking forward to planning our 2027 Webinar events and encourage your feedback in this process.

WCLN, ASM Press, & APHL Webinar Events

To access a full listing of previous WSLH recordings, please visit:

WSLH Training and Events page

To access 2026 ASM webinars and recordings, please visit:

ASM Webinars page

To access and enroll in upcoming 2026 APHL webinars, please visit:

APHL Webinars page



--- LEISURE READING ---

With Halloween festivities around the corner, a book to add to your reading list for the season might be Annie Jacobsen's new non-fiction bestseller *Biological War: A Scenario.* Published in August, this book outlines a future hypothetical crisis in which *Yersinia pestis* is leaked from a lab in Siberia… wait… what… didn't I just hear about this in the news… ***Happy Halloween!***