

Outbreaks of Undetermined Etiology (OUE) Guidelines

*The **CIFOR OUE Guidelines** provide universal recommendations for collecting, shipping, testing, and retaining foodborne outbreak specimens when an etiology is undetermined, even early in an investigation.*

Background

Investigators generally collect and handle foodborne outbreak specimens with a specific agent in mind. But by the time investigators conclude that the etiology is undetermined, the initial specimens may no longer be available or usable. Getting an additional specimen may prove unproductive or impossible, if the patient has recovered or died.

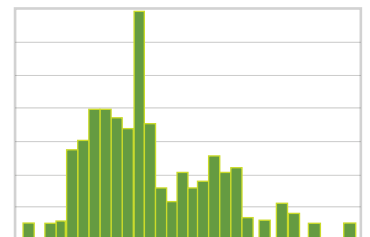
Current specimen collection guidelines are either agent specific or categorized by agent class (e.g. all bacteria or all viruses). These existing guidelines, while helpful when the agent is known or strongly suspected, do not offer clear guidance on outbreaks of undetermined etiology.

Goals

- Suggest optimal, universal specimens for all outbreaks
- Provide adequate specimens for second-tier testing and pathogen discovery
- Use CIFOR-developed recommendations on shipment, rule-out testing, and long-term storage of outbreak specimens


About the OUE Guidelines

- Influenced by documents developed by the [Minnesota](#) and [Wisconsin](#) Departments of Health
- Based on specific outbreak profiles
- Broken down by key symptomology, including:
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
 - Abdominal Cramping
 - Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)
 - Neurological Manifestations (e.g. paresthesias, respiratory depression)
 - Hepatic Symptoms
 - Systemic Illnesses (e.g. fever, weakness, arthritis)
 - Other
- Cover infectious and non-infectious agents
- Includes an OUE Agent List with detailed information, including:
 - Incubation period
 - Primary signs and symptoms
 - Primary specimen(s)
 - Key epidemiological information





Target Audience

- Primarily intended for state health departments making recommendations on specimen collection and conducting testing for foodborne outbreaks
 - Also appropriate for local health departments that conduct their own outbreak investigations (including testing) independent of the state health department
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Accessing the CIFOR OUE Guidelines for iOS app, PC, or Mac

Can be accessed as a FileMaker Go iOS application or a runtime Windows version for PC.

For iPad users running the FileMaker Go app:
Download the [free app](#).

With FileMaker Go installed on an iPad:
Click [CIFOR OUE Specimen Collection](#) to open the file directly in FileMaker Go.
Note: this file will only open on an iPad.

For Windows PC users
View the [CIFOR OUE Guidelines](#) tool on your Windows PC (requires at least Windows 7).

CIFOR thanks the [Oregon Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence](#) that created the FileMaker Go 14 app and Windows runtime version, and the [APHL OUE Guidelines Working Group](#) for producing content and promotional material.

Questions? Contact info@cifor.us.

