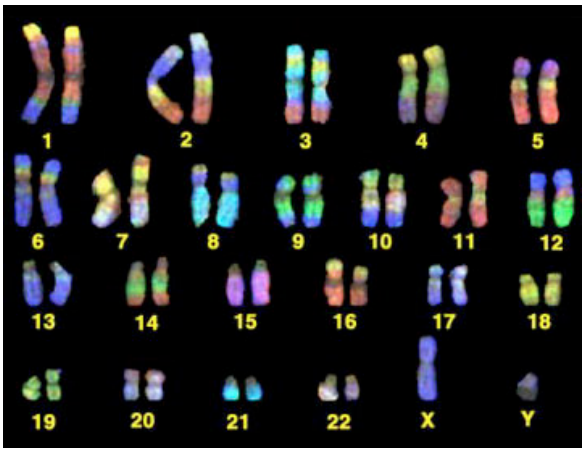
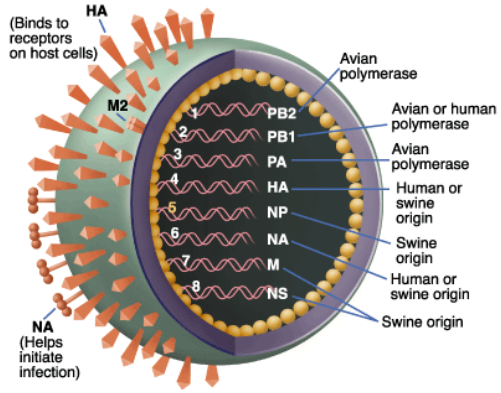


Human chromosomes

Cytogenetics, where we study disease according to its genetic basis. By studying chromosomes, the building blocks that lie within the nucleus of every living cell, we provide information about congenital diseases such as Down's syndrome. We also provide important information about the abnormal changes that occur in the chromosomes of people with diseases like breast cancer, leukaemia and other forms of cancer.

Virology is where diseases such as swine flu, measles, chicken pox, HIV and hepatitis are diagnosed. We use sophisticated equipment and techniques to identify and monitor the progress of viruses; organisms which are so small they can not be seen through a normal microscope. We test for their presence in the blood and other body fluids.
Our role is vital during a flu epidemic or worldwide pandemic.



Diagrammatic representation of the H1N1 (swine flu) virus

What training and qualifications do Medical Laboratory Scientists have?

Medical laboratory scientists hold a Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science, which comprises four and a half years of study and training. On successful completion of four years' study we must then be employed as an intern for a further six months minimum before applying for registration from the Medical Laboratory Science Board. In order to practice we must be registered, fulfil annual competency requirements and hold a current practicing certificate.

NEW ZEALAND
Medical Laboratory Workers

The New Zealand Medical Laboratory Workers' Union is proud to represent medical laboratory workers throughout New Zealand. We are concerned at the adverse effect the current health sector environment is having on our profession. Whilst managers, board members and private laboratory companies come and go, our aim is to support and protect those people who are trained to deliver this essential service to New Zealanders.