



MONTEREY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY (MCPHL)
1270 NATIVIDAD RD, SALINAS, CA 93906
(831) 755-4516

SPECIMEN COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS FOR MONKEYPOX VIRUS (MPXV) TESTING
UPDATED 07/26/2022

Pre-approval is required for testing. Health care providers must contact the Monterey County Health Department's Communicable Disease Unit (831-755-4521) for consultation and testing approval.

Specimens may be delivered **Monday – Friday** between the hours of **8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.** Inadequate or inappropriate specimen collection, storage and transport may yield false test results.

Please contact the Public Health Microbiologists at (831)755-4516 if you have any questions regarding specimen collection.

Please use appropriate PPE prior to collecting specimens.

Collection materials needed per lesion:

- 3 Sterile dry swabs (nylon, polyester, or Dacron with plastic or aluminum shafts)
Note: cotton or calcium alginate swabs are unacceptable
- 3 Sterile containers **OR** 3 Viral Transport Media (VTM) Tubes
- 1 red biohazard bag
- 1 MCPHL requisition form

Instructions:

1. **Collect at least 3 swabs** from the same lesion (1 swab is for MCPHL testing validation).
2. If possible, unroof lesions with a sterile needle. Vigorously swab or brush lesion with the three sterile dry swabs.
3. Place the swab into the dry sterile container **OR** VTM tube. Break the shaft of the swab just below the top of the container and secure the lid. **Individual swabs must be placed into separate sterile containers. Do not pool swabs into one container.**
4. Clearly mark paired specimens and label each container/VTM tube with the patient's name, date of birth, specimen source (site of lesion), and date of collection. Improperly labeled specimens will be rejected.
Note: Each swab must be clearly marked with which lesion it belongs to, e.g., "L elbow swab #1" and "L elbow swab #2".
5. More than one lesion should be sampled, preferably from different body sites.
6. Swabs stored in viral transport media (VTM) are accepted, but not preferred. **DO NOT USE UNIVERSAL TRANSPORT MEDIA (UTM).**
7. Lesion crusts or scabs may be submitted **dry** in separate sterile containers that are clearly labeled.
8. Place the **container inside** the biohazard plastic bag. Place the laboratory **requisition** in the sleeve **outside** of the bag.
9. Store the specimen refrigerated, 2-8°C, if transporting to the laboratory within 24-72 hours. If transport time will be greater than 72 hours, store at -20°C to -80°C. Specimens not meeting these criteria may be rejected.

Note: The above instructions are for MPXV testing performed at Santa Clara Public Health Laboratory with confirmation testing at CDC. MCPHL is in process of implementing MPXV testing in-house. Specimen collection instructions for testing at MCPHL will be forthcoming.