

Guidance for Mpox Specimen Collection and Shipping

SPECIMEN COLLECTION & STORAGE:

- Exercise current infection prevention measures when collecting specimens. See <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-healthcare.html>
- **Two (2) swabs** should be collected **per lesion** (maximum of 3 lesions, or 6 swabs per patient), preferably from different locations on the body and/or from lesions with differing appearances.
 1. Vigorously swab or brush lesion with sterile, dry, nylon, polyester, or Dacron swab. It is not necessary to de-roof the lesion, and do not disinfect lesion site before swabbing.
 - a. Break off the end of the applicator of each swab into separate sterile containers (one swab per container).
 - b. Ensure containers are labeled with patient name, birthdate, and lesion site.
 2. Do not add or store in viral or universal transport media.
 - a. Refrigerate (2–8°C) or freeze specimens within 1 hour of collection.

SHIPPING:

- Specimens must be received within **7 days of collection**. Do not ship specimens on Friday.
 1. Complete 1 requisition form for each lesion. The Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL) Requisition Form is found on BCL's opening page or at <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/bcl/assets/bcl-requisition-form.pdf>.
 2. On the paper requisition form:
 - a. Indicate specimen source as lesion swab.
 - b. In the "Special Instructions" section include the lesion site (e.g., right thigh).
 3. Web portal users:
 - a. Test: Non-variola Orthopoxvirus PCR
 - b. Under "Additional Information" complete:
 - i. Activity type with Routine
 - ii. Specimen Identifier with Human Clinical
 - iii. Specimen source site (e.g., right thigh)
- Specimens should be packaged as **Category B** in an insulated shipping container.
 1. **Shipping on dry ice is strongly recommended**, but frozen ice packs are acceptable.
 2. The packaged specimens may be taken to your local county health department to be couriered to the BCL (at no cost). Contact your local county health department to coordinate courier pick up time. **OR**
 3. Ship or drive specimens directly to the BCL located at **204 Legends Court, Prattville, AL 36066**.

RESULTS:

The BCL offers free access to its Web Portal in which tests can be ordered and results received more rapidly. To establish an account, email LIMSsupport@adph.state.al.us or call (334) 290-6130 and ask for Clinical Web Portal staff.

QUESTIONS:

If you have questions about specimen collection & shipping, call the BCL Microbiology Division at 334-290-6186 or email clab@adph.state.al.us.