



# Messenger

## Honoring the Retirement of Dr. James Beebe

The County of San Luis Obispo (SLO) Board of Supervisors recently passed a resolution to recognize Dr. James Beebe for 13 years of service to the county upon his retirement. Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Beebe oversaw a massive renovation of the laboratory, ushering it into the modern era with advanced technologies, equipment, electronic reporting, and quality control. He also steered laboratory operations in the once-in-a-lifetime COVID-19 pandemic. Highlights of the proceedings may be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/vgVDKGbccnc>.

## Monkeypox Virus Infections

Clinicians are advised to be alert for the characteristic rash of monkeypox virus infection after detection of a positive case in Massachusetts by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) (<https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2022/han00466.asp>). This follows confirmation of clusters of monkeypox in multiple countries. To report suspect cases, call the SLO County Public Health Department at 805-781-5500 (M-F, 8 am to 5 pm) or 805-781-4553 (after hours). The SLO County Public Health Laboratory can test lesion specimens by non-variola orthopoxvirus real-time PCR; preliminarily positive specimens will be referred to the CDC for confirmatory monkeypox virus-specific testing. During specimen collection, sample more than one lesion, preferably from different body sites as follows: 1) Vigorously swab or brush lesion with two separate sterile dry polyester or Dacron swabs; 2) Break off end of the applicator of each swab into a separate sterile container. Do not place swabs in viral or universal transport media. Specimens should be stored and transported at refrigerated temperatures.

## Acute Hepatitis of Unknown Etiology in Pediatric Patients

The CDC is investigating a possible association between pediatric hepatitis and adenovirus infection. Clinicians should continue to follow standard practice for evaluating and managing hepatitis but are recommended to consider adenovirus testing for children with hepatitis of unknown etiology (<https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2022/han00465.asp>). The following specimen types are optimal to aid investigations:

- 1) Whole blood, 2) respiratory specimen (nasopharyngeal swab, sputum, or bronchioalveolar lavage), 3) stool specimen or rectal swab

The laboratory can coordinate testing of suspect cases and can screen both respiratory and stool specimens for adenovirus infection. Please contact the laboratory with any questions.

## SARS-CoV-2 Variant Monitoring

The SLO County Public Health Laboratory has now sequenced more than 1,000 SARS-CoV-2 variants and continues to actively participate in SARS-CoV-2 surveillance. Data are used to inform recommendations on monoclonal antibody therapies in the county. Sequencing results for 52 specimens collected in May 2022 have shown the following circulating lineages:

- Omicron BA.2—96%
    - BA.2 (29%), BA.2.3 (8%), BA.2.9 (4%), BA.2.12.1 (54%), other (2%)
  - Omicron BA.4—4%
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### Updated Requisition

The laboratory has released a new requisition for test ordering, posted on its lab website as requisition 100 ([slocounty.ca.gov/lab](http://slocounty.ca.gov/lab)). The requisition includes updated tests for the following pathogens:

- Herpes Simplex Virus and Varicella-Zoster Virus on the Solana instrument
- SARS-CoV-2, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, *Trichomonas vaginalis*, and *Mycoplasma genitalium* on the Roche cobas instrument

### Questions?

Please contact the Laboratory Director by phone at 805-781-5512 or email at [gmmiller@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:gmmiller@co.slo.ca.us).