



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

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Monkeypox Updates for SLO County Providers

More laboratories now conducting monkeypox testing

More options are now available for monkeypox testing, including commercial laboratories:

- Aegis
www.aegislabs.com/our-services/monkeypox
- ARUP Laboratories
www.ltd.aruplab.com/Tests/Pub/3005716
- Labcorp
www.labcorp.com/infectious-disease/monkeypox
- Mayo Clinic Laboratories
www.mayocliniclabs.com
- Quest Diagnostics
www.questdiagnostics.com/healthcare-professionals/about-our-tests/infectious-diseases/monkeypox
- Sonic Healthcare (WestPac Labs)
www.westpaclab.com

Contact a participating laboratory for testing.

Note that **Labcorp** uses the CDC Orthopox assay and conducts confirmatory monkeypox testing through CDC, which may require more time compared to **Quest Diagnostics**, which uses an in-house PCR test for non-variola orthopoxviruses and monkeypox (specifically the West African clade).

Pre-screenings no longer required* for testing from the Public Health Laboratory

Previously, health screenings by a Public Health nurse were required to submit specimens for monkeypox testing through the SLO County Public Health Laboratory. However, this is no longer a requirement for SLO County providers.

* Screenings by a Public Health Nurse are still required for testing of specimens from Santa Barbara and Ventura County providers.

Providers may order monkeypox tests from Public Health by completing a [requisition form](#).

For more information on monkeypox:

- SLO County Public Health Monkeypox Information: <https://slocounty.ca.gov/monkeypox>
- CDPH Monkeypox page: www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/monkeypox.aspx
- CDC Monkeypox Information for Healthcare Professionals: www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/index.html

Public Health Department

2191 Johnson Avenue | San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 | (P) 805-781-5500 | (F) 805-781-5543

www.slopublichealth.org



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY

Phone: (805) 781-5507 | Fax: (805) 781-1023 | Weekend Phone: (805) 305-8188
www.sloPublicHealth.org/Lab

SPECIMEN COLLECTION & TRANSPORT INSTRUCTIONS

Specimen Collection Procedure for Poxvirus PCR Testing

PROVIDER INFORMATION

If a specimen tests positive for non-variola orthopoxvirus DNA, a duplicate specimen will be referred to the CDC for confirmatory monkeypox testing. The CDC requires that a case ID be obtained prior to referral. To obtain a case ID, the following information is needed by the laboratory:

1. Patient initials, date of birth, and sex
2. Clinical and epidemiologic criteria for testing (e.g., presence of characteristic rash, contact to a known case, etc.)

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

1. Collect the skin lesions with a dry swab using a sterile nylon, polyester, or Dacron swab with a plastic or thin aluminum shaft. Do not use other types of swabs. Place in a sterile container and refrigerate within an hour of collection.
2. More than one lesion should be sampled, preferably 2 to 3 lesions from different body sites, for preliminary and confirmatory testing.
 - a. **Vigorously** swab or brush each lesion with two separate sterile dry swabs.
 - b. Break off swabs and place each into separate sterile tubes or containers.
 - c. Sample, label and store each lesion separately. **Do not place in VTM or UTM.** Swabs must remain dry.
 - d. Fill out the San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory Requisition completely.
 - e. Indicate on requisition that you are requesting **Poxvirus testing**.
 - f. Label the specimen with the patient's full name, date of collection, and specimen source.
 - g. Include patient's vaccination history [date of smallpox (vaccinia) vaccination], clinical findings and symptoms (date of rash onset), and travel or exposure history on the requisition.
3. **Note: If testing is needed for other viral causes of rash, separate collection is required.**

Preferred specimen types by virus are as follows:

- a. Varicella-Zoster Virus and Herpes Simplex Viruses: Swab specimens collected from cutaneous and mucocutaneous lesions in viral transport media (VTM) or universal transport medium (UTM).
- b. Enterovirus: Nasopharyngeal swab in VTM.

SPECIMEN STORAGE & TRANSPORT

- Dry swabs of lesions should be stored at refrigerated temperature (4°C) if shipping in 24-72 hours, otherwise store dry swabs at -80 °C.
- Clinical specimens should be shipped ASAP at refrigerated temperature in Category B packaging.
- Deliver to: San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory, 2191 Johnson Ave, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

REJECTION CRITERIA

- Incomplete specimen labeling/documentation
- Improperly stored specimens
- Swabs/scabs placed in viral or universal transport media
- Holding time greater than 72 hours at refrigerated temperature
- Specimen tubes/containers not sealed properly



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LABORATORY TEST FACT SHEET

TEST: POXVIRUS PCR

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1. Patient initials, date of birth, and sex
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TEST DESCRIPTION

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory performs both orthopoxvirus and non-variola orthopoxvirus PCR assays. The orthopoxvirus PCR assay detects DNA from many orthopoxviruses including variola, vaccinia, cowpox, monkeypox, camelpox, ectromelia, and gerbilpox viruses. The non-variola orthopox PCR detects DNA from non-variola orthopoxviruses, including vaccinia, cowpox, monkeypox and ectromelia viruses. Results of these assays are for the presumptive identification orthopoxvirus DNA. Specimens that test positive for orthopoxvirus nucleic acid are considered presumptive for an orthopox and additional specimen(s) will be referred to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) for confirmatory testing.

Sensitivity and Specificity

Performance characteristics for these orthopoxvirus PCR tests have been determined by the CDC.

SPECIMENS ACCEPTED FOR TESTING

1. Acceptable specimens: Dry swabs (nylon, polyester, or Dacron) of skin lesions placed in separate sterile containers. The same lesion should be sampled with two swabs and each swab placed in a separate sterile container. The duplicate swab will be used for reference testing.
2. Store and transport at refrigerated temperature (4°C) if shipping in 24-72 hours; otherwise, store dry swabs at -80 °C.

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