

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) detects Monkeypox using real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Obtain approval for testing from the DOH Bureau of Epidemiology (717-787-3350) or your local health department prior to submitting specimens. Follow the instructions below when collecting and submitting specimens.

**DO NOT SUBMIT SPECIMENS UNTIL APPROVAL FOR TESTING IS GRANTED**

**ACCEPTABLE SPECIMEN:** A dry swab of lesion fluid or the surface of the lesion

**COLLECTION PROCEDURE:**

- Dry swab collection and transport system such as [BD BBL™ CultureSwab™ EZ collection and transport systems](#) or
  - Sterile dry polyester or Dacron swabs and sterile screw-capped plastic container if the collection and transport system is not available. Do not use cotton swabs.
1. Prepare a clean work surface, gather the collection supplies, and perform hand hygiene.
  2. Don clean gloves and loosen the collection container, if applicable.
  3. Collect two dry swabs from the same lesion by vigorously brushing/swabbing the lesion.
  4. Using aseptic technique, immediately place the swabs into the sterile collection container. **Two swabs from the same lesion can be put into one sterile container.**

**DO NOT ADD ANY VIRAL TRANSPORT MEDIA, SALINE, OR FIXATIVES**

5. Label each collection container with patient first and last name, date of birth, source (site of lesion) and date of collection.
6. Collect a total of 2-3 lesions from different body sites by repeating steps 3-5.
7. Refrigerate specimen(s) at 2-8° C within one hour of collection. If not shipping specimens to the BOL immediately, refrigerate for up to seven days or freeze at -20° C or lower for up to six weeks.
8. Complete the [BOL Specimen Submission Form\(s\)](#).

**THE BOL WILL REJECT SPECIMENS IF THE INFORMATION ON THE COLLECTION CONTAINER(S) AND THE SUBMISSION FORM(S) DO NOT MATCH.**

**PACKAGING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Place the collection container(s) in the sealable compartment(s) of a biohazard bag; one container per compartment. Seal the biohazard bag.
2. Place the submission form(s) in the outer compartment of the biohazard bag. Do not allow the form(s) to touch the collection container(s)
3. Place the biohazard bag and a cold pack into a shipping box.

**SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Package, label, and ship specimens as Category B infectious substance affecting humans (UN 3373) in accordance with the US Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Regulations and the International Air Transport Association Dangerous Goods Regulations.
2. Address the package. Use the BOL's address in the footer of this document.
3. If possible, ship the specimen(s) immediately on cold packs. If not, follow the storage directions above.
4. Contact the BOL to arrange for delivery via courier. Provide the following information: address, location, contact name and phone number, number of packages and what time the package(s) will be ready.

**REFERENCES**

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Specimen Collection and Transport Guidelines for Suspect Smallpox Cases](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Monkeypox Information for Lab Personnel](#)
- [Test Order | Submitting Specimens to CDC | Infectious Diseases Laboratories | CDC](#)

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