

The Addition of Commercial Labs for Monkeypox Virus Testing

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TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Denise A. Johnson, M.D., FACOG, FACHE, Acting Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	The Addition of Commercial Labs for Monkeypox virus Testing
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This transmission is a “Health Advisory,” and provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL; **EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE **LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP; **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

SUMMARY

- On June 22, [HHS announced](#) that five commercial laboratory companies would soon begin offering monkeypox testing.
- As per PA [HAN 643](#) and PA [HAN 647](#), providers should consider testing any patient who presents with [a rash or lesions that are consistent with monkeypox](#) or presents with a rash or lesions and an [epidemiologic risk factor](#) for monkeypox.
- With this additional monkeypox testing capacity provided by commercial laboratory companies, providers will have more convenient access to monkeypox testing.
- If you have any questions, please call PA DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) or your local health department.

On June 22, 2022 [HHS announced](#) that five commercial laboratory companies are offering or will soon be offering monkeypox testing. With this announcement, the CDC has shipped the tests to these laboratories and their employees have been trained on their administration.

As of July 6, 2022, the commercial lab, Labcorp, began testing for monkeypox using CDC’s orthopoxvirus test. This test detects all non-smallpox related orthopoxviruses, including monkeypox. Labcorp will offer this testing at its largest facility in the United States and will be able to accept specimens from anywhere in the country. Labcorp expects to be able to perform up to 10,000 tests per week. In its [media statement](#) the CDC anticipates [additional commercial laboratories](#) will come online and monkeypox testing capacity will continue to increase throughout the month of July. Providers should frequently check updates on when additional commercial laboratories are able to perform testing.

Testing will also continue to be available through the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) with approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Health or a local Health Department. Providers should call their local Health Department or the Pennsylvania Department of Health to discuss the case and determine if testing at BOL is necessary. Once testing has been approved there are [specific guidelines](#) that must be followed for appropriate specimen collection. Currently, only a dry swab of lesion fluid or the surface of the lesion are acceptable sources.

As is outlined in PA [HAN 643](#) and PA [HAN 647](#), providers should consider testing any patient who presents with [a rash or lesions that are consistent with monkeypox](#) and/or presents with a rash or lesions and an [epidemiologic risk factor](#) for monkeypox. These risk factors include:

- Travel History, especially international travel
- Contact with a person who has a similar rash or lesions or has a diagnosis of a known or suspected case of monkeypox
- Close or intimate contact with individuals in a social network experiencing monkeypox infections. This includes MSM who meet partners through an online website, digital application (app), or social event (e.g., bar or party)

The latest CDC information on monkeypox is available at www.cdc.gov/monkeypox.

The ability of commercial labs to test for monkeypox is a key pillar in the comprehensive strategy to combat the spread of monkeypox virus. Adding commercial labs will not only increase testing capacity but will make it more convenient for providers and patients to access tests by using existing provider-to-lab relationships.

If you have any questions, please call PA DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) or your local health department.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of July 8, 2022, but may be modified in the future.
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