

San Diego County Public Health Laboratory Mpox Clade I Test Approval and Lesion Swab Collection Guide

Step 1: For external providers, request approval for clade-specific testing for suspect MPOX Clade I cases by contacting SD County Public Health Services (for epidemiological criteria and clinical assessment), prior to sending sample for testing. Call phone # (619) 692-5500 during regular business hours (M-F 8:00am-5:00pm) and phone # (858) 565-5255 for afterhours, weekend, and holiday approvals. If you reach a voice mail, please leave a message requesting for a call back and leave a direct number where you can be reached. For internal County clinicians contact San Diego County Public Health Laboratory at phone# (619) 990-1470 during business hours and phone # (619) 666-8889 after hours for requesting specimen pick up.

Step 2: Once clinical/epidemiological assessment is complete and testing is approved, please complete San Diego County Public Health laboratory requisition form for submission. Use online fillable form [SD County Test Requisition Updates 8.2.2023.pdf \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](#)

Step 3: Send **LESION swab collected in VTM (viral transport media)** to San Diego County public health laboratory for further testing. Specimens must be shipped as **Category B**. Please note that prior to shipment, contact San Diego Public Health Lab at phone# (619) 990-1470 during business hours and at phone # (619) 666-8889 after hours for notification (**San Diego Health Lab specimen receiving address is – 5570 Overland Ave, Suite 103, CA 92123**).

For specimen collection see instructions below:

- a. **Collect 2 swabs from each lesion** by vigorously swabbing/brushing avoiding contamination. One set of swabs is for preliminary testing and the other set will be for confirmatory testing. Make sure that both swabs touch the same lesion.
- b. **Acceptable swab type** – sterile synthetic swabs (including polyester, Dacron, nylon) with a plastic, wood, or thin aluminum shaft should be used to collect specimens. Do not use cotton swabs.
- c. Avoid touching the length of the swab shaft that will be submerged in viral transport media.
- d. Apply firm pressure (generally firm enough so that the swab shaft, if plastic, may bend slightly). This may result in discomfort or slight pain, but it is necessary to obtain adequate DNA.
- e. See reference - [Testing Patients for Monkeypox \(cdc.gov\)](#) , [Tips for Adequate Collection of a Lesion Specimen from a Suspect Monkeypox Virus Case \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- f. Label specimen with at least 2 unique identifiers (Patient name and date of birth).
- g. Store specimens refrigerated (2–8°C) or frozen (-20°C or lower) within an hour after collection. Refrigerated specimens can be stored for up to 7 days and frozen specimens for up to 60 days.

For specimen transport follow the instructions: Once specimen collection is complete, providers can schedule specimen drop off by calling your Provider Central Laboratory or San Diego County Epidemiology Unit, to San Diego County Public Health Laboratory. If you do not have a courier, drop off service available, call San Diego County Public Health Laboratory at phone# (619) 990-1470 during business hours and at phone # (619 after) 666-8889 hours for requesting specimen pick up.

Providers and Sentinel Labs please follow these instructions.



Additional forms for confirmatory testing: [VRDL General Purpose Submittal Form \(ca.gov\)](https://www.vrdl.ca.gov/submit)

Important Contacts:

San Diego County Public Health Laboratory

- Business hour phone number (619) 990-1470
- After hour phone number (619) 666-8889

San Diego County Public Health Epidemiology Unit

- Business hour phone number (619) 692-5500
- After hour phone number (858) 565-5255 (Ask for duty officer)

