



Public Health Laboratory

ORTHOPOX TESTING GUIDANCE

Pre-approval

Pre-approval is required by San Bernardino County Department of Public Health Communicable Disease Section (CDS) at 1 (800) 722-4794 prior to testing. Please contact the Public Health Laboratory when approval is obtained and when the specimens will be shipped to the Laboratory.

Specimen Collection

- Dry swabs of lesions, using sterile nylon, polyester, or Dacron swabs with plastic or aluminum shaft from cases that meet both epidemiological and clinical criteria.
- Patients must present firm, well circumscribed, deep-seated, and umbilicated skin lesions associated with monkeypox or other orthopox virus.
- Follow personal protection equipment guidance when collecting specimens
- More than one lesion should be sampled (no more than 3), preferably from different body sites, for preliminary and confirmatory testing. If possible: (1) unroof lesions with sterile needle, (2) vigorously swab lesions with **two separate sterile dry swabs**, (3) break off swabs into separate 1.5- or 2-mL screw-capped tubes or place each entire swab in a separate sterile container.
- Sample, label, and store each lesion separately.
- Do not add or store any type of transport media.

Specimen storage and shipping

- Store all specimens at 4°C if shipping within 24-72 hours; store at -80C if shipping will be delayed.
- Complete one San Bernardino County Laboratory Requisition Form for each specimen container. Under “Additional Comments/Information” please indicate: **Monkeypox rule-out**. Include the CDS contact who approved testing.
- Include printed copy of completed requisition form outside the sealed Ziploc bag containing specimens.
- Ship all specimens on cold pack (2°- 8°C) or dry ice within 24 to 72 hours.
- Specimens should be packed and shipped as Category B Infectious substances (UN 3373) in accordance with the U.S. DOT’s Hazardous Materials Regulations and IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations.
- Before shipping, call the public health laboratory with expected shipping date.
- Ship specimens and requisition form to:

San Bernardino County Public Health Laboratory
150 E. Holt Blvd, 1st Floor
Ontario, CA 91761
Phone: (909) 458-9430

For questions about specimen collection, submittal, or shipping, please contact the San Bernardino County Public Health Laboratory at (909) 458-9430 during regular business hours 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.