

# Measles Testing Guidance

Testing methodology: Detection of viral RNA by reverse transcription real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).

Turnaround time: 3 business days

## Specimens

### Throat/Oropharyngeal (preferred) or NP Swab

- Collect within 2 weeks of rash onset.
- Use a sterile synthetic swab (e.g., Dacron).
- Throat swab (preferred respiratory specimen): vigorously swab tonsillar areas with sterile Dacron swab.
- Nasopharyngeal swab: firmly rub posterior nasopharynx with sterile Dacron swab.
- Place swab into liquid viral transport media (VTM) or universal transport media (UTM). Minimum volume 2-3 ml. Do not use bacterial transport media.

### Urine (unprocessed or processed)

- Unprocessed urine: collect 10-50 ml urine in a sterile container, within 2 weeks of rash onset. Collect from the first part of the urine stream. The first morning void is ideal.
- Processed urine: centrifuge 50-100 ml of urine at 2500 x g for 15 minutes at 2-8°C. Resuspend the pellet in 2-3 ml of VTM or UTM. If processing is not possible, store and ship the sample at 2°-8°C within 24 hours.

## Specimen Storage and Shipping

- Respiratory swabs and urine pellets: freeze or refrigerate specimens promptly after collection.
- Unprocessed urine: refrigerate specimens promptly after collection. Do not freeze unprocessed urine.
- Ship refrigerated specimens on cold packs, frozen specimens on dry ice within 24-72 hours.

## Specimen Testing

- Patient's assigned lab should be considered prior to sending specimens to San Bernardino County Public Health Laboratory
- Phone: (800) 722-4794 (available business hours, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- After Hours Phone: (800) 472-2376 (available after hours, weekends, and holidays)

## Additional Information

- Complete the SBCPHL Laboratory Requisition Form for each specimen.
- If applicable, include contact information of the communicable disease investigator assigned to the case.
- Send submittal form by secure email to [dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov); include hard copy with specimens.

Ship approved specimens to:

**San Bernardino County Public Health  
Laboratory**

**150 E. Holt Blvd.**

**1st Floor Lab Receiving**

**Ontario, CA 91761**

Notify SBCPHL that specimens are being submitted by e-mailing [dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov).

In a secure e-mail, please include patient name, date of birth, and the name and contact information of the point of contact at the submitting facility. Also, include the contact information of the communicable disease investigator assigned to the case (if applicable).

Questions about specimen collection, submittal, or shipping: Please contact SBCPHL at (909) 458-9430 during regular business hours Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., or e-mail [dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:dphlab@dph.sbcounty.gov).