

DCLS Measles Testing Instructions

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) must approve patients for measles testing at DCLS prior to submitting specimens for testing. Contact your local Health Department for assistance.

I. Specimen Collection and Storage

1. DCLS accepts the following specimens for testing.
 - **Real-Time PCR (secondary specimens are recommended but not required)**
 1. **Primary specimen** = Nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs in VTM or UTM
 2. **Secondary specimens** = Oropharyngeal (OP)/Throat swabs in VTM or UTM
= Urine collected in a sealed, sterile specimen cup
 - **Serology - IgM and/or IgG (IgG only/immunity testing may be requested by VDH Epidemiologists)**
 1. Serum: **(Acceptable volume = 170µL minimum / 2mL optimal)**
 - 5mL whole blood collected in a red-top blood tube (**spin down immediately**) and place serum in a sealed, sterile tube before transport
 - or
 - 5mL whole blood collected in a serum separator tube (SST) – (**spin down within 2 hours of collection**)
2. Measles test kits may be requested by emailing DCLS_SSSKits@dgs.virginia.gov
 - Kit materials include:
 1. 7.5 mL Serum Separator Tube (Qty 1)
 2. VTM (Qty 2)
 3. Sterile Swab (Qty 2)
 4. Sterile Urine Cup (Qty 1)
 5. 8x10 Biohazard Bag (Qty 3)
 6. Bubble Pouch (Qty 1)
 7. 12x15 Ziplock & Docs (Qty 1)
 8. DCLS Measles Testing Reminder (ID # 60688) (Qty 1)
 9. DCLS Test Request Form (ID # 16857) (Qty 1)
 - Submitters may also utilize their own inventory of unexpired synthetic swabs and VTM or UTM
3. Collected samples must be refrigerated at 2-8°C until transport.
4. Once VDH approval for measles testing has occurred, if there are questions about shipping to DCLS outside of the standard courier schedule, please reach out to the DCLS emergency on-call phone at 804-355-4617 for guidance.

II. Specimen Transport and Submission

5. DCLS must receive samples submitted for PCR within **72 hours** of collection and within **48 hours** for serology.
Specimens can be frozen and shipped on dry ice if they need to be held longer than 72 hours before transport to DCLS.
6. Specimens must be transported refrigerated with **frozen ice packs** in an insulated hard walled container to ensure specimens have an arrival temperature of 2-8°C. **Use additional frozen ice packs in warmer months.**
7. A completed [DCLS Test Request Form](#) must be submitted for each patient that will be tested.
 - **Full patient name and date of birth** (must match specimen label)
 - **Complete submitter information**
 - **Complete treating physician information**
 - **Date and time of specimen collection**
 - **Onset date and symptoms**
 - **Suspected disease**
 - **Vaccination and travel history**
 - **VDH Outbreak ID, if applicable**
 - **Test request**

III. Results Reporting

9. Results will be reported the same day of testing.
10. Verbal reporting of results will be provided to the listed submitter on the test request form and to VDH. Results may be verbally reported to the treating physician if specified on the DCLS Test Request Form and if contact information is provided.
11. Hard copy reports will be mailed to the submitter address listed on the request form.

IV. Contact Information

For testing, kits, and/or transport questions, contact the following:

- Email DCLS_Respiratory@dgs.virginia.gov
- Dr. LaToya Griffin-Thomas (Lead Scientist, Respiratory/VPD Testing): 804-648-4480, x281
- Sean Kelly (Group Manager, PCR Testing): 804-648-4480, x227
- Dr. Heather Masri (Group Manager, Serology Testing): 804-648-4480, x269
- Terri Harper (Group Manager, Specimen Transport): 804-648-4480, x140
- DCLS Emergency Number: 804-335-4617

NOTE: Specimens sent to DCLS for measles vaccine strain (MeVA) testing, which will be forwarded on to a reference laboratory, must be received at 2-8°C within ten days (< 10) from collection.