

# Testing Patients for Mpox

## What specimen to collect

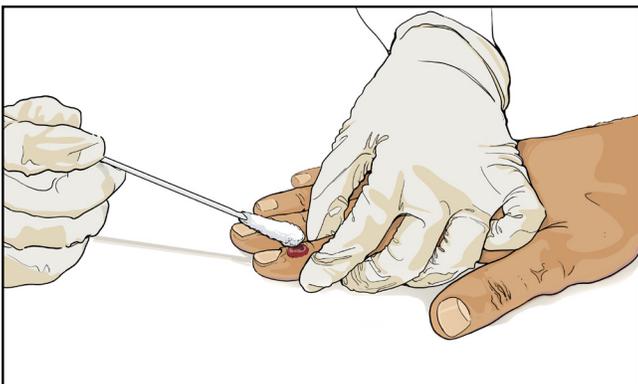
- » Skin lesion material, including swabs of lesion surface, exudate, or lesion crusts are the recommended specimen types for laboratory testing of mpox virus specimens.
- » Laboratories may not be able to perform testing on all specimen types. Contact the testing laboratory for specifics on acceptable specimen types.
- For further testing of a specimen at CDC, three types of specimens are accepted.
  - » Dry swabs of lesion material
  - » Swabs of lesion material in viral transport media (VTM)\*
  - » Lesion crusts

\* Not currently accepted for clade I mpox testing.

See [Test Directory | Submitting Specimens to CDC | Infectious Diseases Laboratories](#) for more information.

## How to collect lesion specimens

1. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Collect two swabs from each lesion, preferably from different locations on the body or from lesions which differ in appearance.
  - » Use sterile, dry synthetic swabs (including, but not limited to polyester, nylon, or Dacron swabs) with a plastic, wood, or thin aluminum shaft. (Any type of shaft is acceptable as long as it can be broken or cut).
  - » Do not use cotton swabs.



3. Generally, with vigorous swabbing, sufficient monkeypox virus DNA is present on the surface of a lesion, and you don't need to de-roof the lesion before swabbing. Put each swab into a separate container, either:
  - » By breaking off or cutting the end of each swab's applicator into a 1.5- or 2-mL screw-capped tube with O-ring or other sterile leak-proof container (e.g. sterile urine cup) or
  - » By putting the entire swab in a sterile container that has a gasket seal. Use a plastic container instead of a glass container, when possible.

## How to ship specimens

- All mpox specimens except clade I mpox viral cultures (materials containing or contaminated with intentionally laboratory propagated virus) can be shipped as UN 3373 Biological Substance, Category B.
- Specimens should first be tested by a public health or clinical laboratory unless you are authorized to send specimens directly to CDC.
- If you are authorized to send specimens directly to CDC, or if you are sending specimens to CDC for viral characterization: Store refrigerated (2-8°C) or frozen (-20°C or lower) within an hour of collection.
  - » Ship specimens on dry ice, when possible.
  - » Specimens received outside of acceptable temperature ranges will be rejected.
  - » Include an electronic Global File Accessioning Template (GFAT) form and ensure that each specimen is labeled with a unique identifier GFAT.

If fewer than 20 specimens are being submitted to CDC, a [CDC 50.34 form](#) for each specimen may be submitted instead of a GFAT.

Please include a printed manifest of your specimens with your shipment. Password protect, then email, the GFAT form to [Poxviruslab@cdc.gov](mailto:Poxviruslab@cdc.gov)

For patients with confirmed mpox, health care providers may send serum to CDC directly for pox serology test. See [CDC Poxvirus Serology](#) for details.

For more information, see CDC's Mpox: [Information for Healthcare Professionals](#) page.