

Instructions for Healthcare Providers for Collecting and Submitting Specimens for Measles Testing at the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS)

1. DCLS measles specimen collection kits are available upon request. To request a kit, email the DCLS Kits Department at DCLS_SSSKits@dgs.virginia.gov. Freeze the cold packs until ready for shipment.
2. If measles is suspected, contact your [local health department](#) (LHD) for public health testing approval; if testing is approved, also discuss shipment of specimens to DCLS.
3. If public health testing is approved, collect and store the specimens as described in the table.
 - PCR testing **requires** a nasopharyngeal (NP) specimen collected in VTM or UTM; other specimens (e.g., throat/OP swab, urine) will be tested only if they accompany the NP specimen.
 - Serology testing requires a serum specimen that **must be** tested within 48 hours of collection (blood collected in a **red-top or serum-separator blood tube, spun down**).
 - Verify that each tube has been clearly labeled with the patient’s name and the date of collection before packaging specimens for shipment to DCLS.
4. Complete the **required** DCLS Test Request Form that is available [here](#). If the form is not submitted with the specimen(s), the specimen(s) will be rejected. You may use one form for multiple specimens.
 - On Page 1, complete all fields where information is available. The Name and Birth Date **must** exactly match what is on the specimen container or the specimen will be rejected. In the "Additional Comments," enter measles testing, symptomatic case (if applicable).
 - On Page 2, check Measles PCR and Serology (as applicable).
5. Submit specimens to DCLS. DCLS **must** receive the PCR samples within 72 hours of collection, and the serology specimens within 48 hours of collection. Use the routine DCLS courier if available at your facility; otherwise, discuss transport with the [local health department](#).
6. The estimated turnaround time is 1–2 days, depending on volume of testing and repeat testing needs.

	Test	Instructions	Comments
Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab	PCR (primary specimen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 1 synthetic swab with 1 vial of VTM/UTM • Use the same swab for both nostrils • Keep refrigerated until ready to ship • Ship on frozen ice packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect as close to clinical onset as possible preferably within the first 3 days of illness, but no later than 10 days after rash onset.
Throat/oropharyngeal (OP) swab	PCR (secondary specimen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 1 synthetic swab with 1 vial of VTM/UTM • Take sample from back of the throat, not sides of the mouth or cheek cavity. • Keep refrigerated until ready to ship • Ship on frozen ice packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only tested if accompanying a NP specimen.
Urine	PCR (secondary specimen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-50 mL of urine in 1 sterile urine cup • First voided morning urine is preferred • Keep refrigerated until ready to ship • Ship on frozen ice packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only tested if accompanying a NP specimen. • Do not catheterize patient for specimen collection (can forgo testing this specimen)
Serum	Serology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 serum-separator tube (SST) or red top blood tube. If collected in a red top blood tube, spin down the tube and place separated serum in a sterile tube. • Optimal serum volume is 2mL, but the minimal volume (50uL) is acceptable • Keep refrigerated until ready to ship • Ship on frozen ice packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A repeat specimen should be collected and tested if IgM serology testing is negative for specimens collected within 72 hours of rash onset.