

Guidance for Monkeypox Specimen Collection and Shipping

Specimens **must be approved for testing** by the Alabama Department of Public Health prior to submission by completing the clinical consultation form at <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/monkeypox/healthcare.html>

SPECIMEN COLLECTION & STORAGE:

- Exercise current infection prevention measures when collecting specimens. See <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-healthcare.html>
- **Two (2) swabs** should be collected **per lesion** (maximum of 3 lesions, or 6 swabs per patient), preferably from different locations on the body and/or from lesions with differing appearances.
 1. Vigorously swab or brush lesion with sterile, dry, nylon, polyester, or Dacron swab. It is not necessary to de-roof the lesion before swabbing.
 - a. Break off the end of the applicator of each swab into separate sterile containers (one swab per container).
 - b. Ensure containers are labeled with patient name, birthdate, and lesion site.
 2. Do not add or store in viral or universal transport media.
 - a. Refrigerate (2–8°C) or freeze specimens within 1 hour of collection.

SHIPPING:

- Specimens must be received within **7 days of collection**. Do not ship specimens on Friday.
 1. Complete 1 requisition form for each lesion. The Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL) Requisition Form is found on BCL's opening page or at <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/bcl/assets/bcl-requisition-form.pdf>.
 2. On the requisition form:
 - a. Include monkeypox state ID.
 - b. Indicate specimen source as lesion swab.
 - c. Include the lesion site (e.g., right thigh) in the "Special Instructions" section.
 - d. For test requested, select "Other" and write monkeypox.
- Specimens should be packaged as **Category B** in an insulated shipping container.
 1. **Shipping on dry ice is strongly recommended**, but frozen ice packs are acceptable.
 2. The packaged specimens may be taken to your local county health department to be couriered to the BCL (at no cost). Contact your local county health department to coordinate courier pick up time. **OR**
 3. Ship or drive specimens directly to the BCL located at **204 Legends Court, Prattville, AL 36066**.

QUESTIONS:

If you have questions about specimen collection & shipping, call the BCL Microbiology Division at 334-290-6186 or email clab@adph.state.al.us.