

## Mpox Sample Collection and Referral

**PLEASE REPORT ALL CONFIRMED CASES TO DISEASE CONTROL IMMEDIATELY  
BY CALLING 701.328.2378/800.472.2180**

Mpox is an *Orthopoxvirus* that is endemic to central and western Africa. Starting in May of 2022 widespread identification of Mpox has been confirmed in non-endemic areas, including the United States. The ND Department of Health Laboratory Services will utilize a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to detect *Orthopoxvirus*. Specimens that test positive for *Orthopoxvirus* at the ND Laboratory Services Division will be sent to CDC for confirmatory testing and further classification. Any laboratory questions can be directed to Stacey Alexander or Maggie Kuklok at 701-328-6272.

### Collection of Specimen

Using two sterile, dry synthetic swabs (including, but not limited to polyester, nylon, or Dacron) with a plastic, wood, or thin aluminum shaft, swab the lesion vigorously to collect adequate DNA.

- Two swabs from each lesion should be collected for testing.
- Do not use cotton or rayon swabs.
- It is not necessary to de-roof the lesion before swabbing.

Break off the end of each swab's applicator into a 1.5- or 2-mL screw-capped tube with O-ring or place the entire swab in a sterile container that has a gasket seal like a 15 mL conical tube.

- Multiple swabs from different locations on the body or from lesions which differ in appearance can also be collected.
- Swabs and other specimens should each be placed in different containers

#### Dry Swabs are Preferred for testing

If a screw capped 1.5/2 ml or 15ml conical tube is not available swabs in Viral Transport Media (VTM) are also acceptable.

- Universal Transport Media (UTM) is not acceptable and should not be used for samples submitted to NDHHS

### Sample Storage and Shipping

Specimens being sent for testing should be stored

- Refrigerated (2-8°C) for up to 7 days shipped on ice packs OR
- Frozen (-20°C or lower) for up to 60 days and shipped on dry ice

Complete the online [Laboratory Services Test Request](#)

- Specimens can be shipped Category B

### Turnaround Time

Testing at the ND Lab is performed Monday - Friday and has a turnaround time of 24 hours after receipt in the lab.

Turnaround time for CDC confirmatory testing is 1-5 days after receipt in their lab.

### Additional Resources

CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/prep-collection-specimens.html>