

San Diego County Public Health Laboratory

Measles PCR

CPT Code(s): 87798

NOTE: All requests for measles testing must be first assessed for the epidemiologic and clinical history. Test must be approved by the Immunization Program staff or medical director at 866-358-2966. Please call for after hours assessments at 858-565-5255.

Description of Test:

This assay is utilized for detection of measles virus nucleic acids in cases associated with rash-related respiratory disease.

Test Method:

Real-Time Reverse Transcriptase-Polymerase Chain Reaction

Acceptable Specimens:

- Respiratory swabs
 - Nasopharyngeal swabs
 - Nasal aspirates
 - Oropharyngeal (Throat) swabs
- Urine from a first morning voided specimen collected up to 10 days after rash onset
 - Collect as much as 50-100ml (no minimum amount)
 - Urine specimen must be shipped within 24 hours of collection.
 - DO NOT freeze the urine specimen. The entire specimen must be stored at 4°C and shipped on cold pack

NOTE: Swab specimens must be collected using only swabs with a synthetic tip, such as nylon, or Dacron®, and an aluminum or plastic shaft. Calcium alginate swabs are unacceptable and cotton swabs with wooden shafts are not recommended.

Storage and Transport Conditions:

Swab specimens in Viral Transport Media (VTM) can be stored refrigerated (2-8°C) for up to 72 hours from the time of collection before testing. If unable to transport within 72 hours after collection, freeze at ≤ -70°C and transport frozen and keep frozen at ≤ -70°C until testing. Specimens should be transported on ice packs to the laboratory.

Clinical Significance/Interpretation:

Negative- No measles nucleic acid detected by PCR.

Positive- Measles nucleic acid detected by PCR.

Inconclusive- RNase P not detected which indicated absence of sufficient human cells in sample due to poor collection or loss of specimen integrity. Please collect another specimen for repeat testing.

Days Test is Performed and Turn Around Time (TAT) for Results:

Performed when received, TAT=1 business day

Note: Testing can be performed the same day if specimen is received in the laboratory by 11:00 am that day.