

THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH LABORATORY

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Mailing: PO Box 1125, Burlington, VT 05402-1125

1-800-660-9997 (VT only) or 1-802-338-4724

**Instructions for Collecting and Shipping Specimens for Mumps Detection by PCR
VDHL Kit 11**

Kit components:

- One screw-cap tube of viral transport medium (VTM)
- One flocked synthetic swab
- Metal inner container
- Biohazard bag
- VDHL Clinical Test Request form (Micro 220)

Health care providers should notify the VDH Epidemiology Program at 802-863-7240 or 1-800-640-4374 (VT only) to arrange for testing. Epidemiologists are available at these numbers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

A. Acceptable Specimens

- Buccal swabs

B. Collection of buccal swab specimens

Collect buccal swabs as soon as mumps disease is suspected. Real-time reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) has the greatest diagnostic sensitivity when samples are collected within 0–3 days after parotitis onset but can be collected up to 10 days. If >10 days since symptom onset, PCR testing is no longer recommended.

- 1.** Two patient identifiers **MUST** be on the specimen tube (for example, patient's name and date of birth). Specimens without two patient identifiers will be rejected.
- 2.** The buccal swab specimens are obtained by massaging the parotid gland area for 30 seconds prior to swabbing the area around Stensen's duct. Do **NOT** use cotton swabs. Cotton swabs may contain substances that are inhibitory to enzymes used in rRT-PCR.
- 3.** Remove the cap from the VTM tube. Place the swab into the VTM. Break off the upper portion of the shaft and discard. Place the cap back onto the VTM tube tightly.
- 4.** Place the labeled viral transport tube containing the swab into the metal container provided. Screw cap on tightly.
- 5.** Place the metal container containing the specimen into the Ziploc portion of the biohazard bag.

C. Storage and Shipment

1. Fill out the requisition form (Micro 220) completely. All information is required to ensure accurate and efficient processing of the specimen and reporting of test results.

- Name and address of health care provider
- Patient's name, address, and date of birth
- Patient's gender
- Date and time of specimen collection
- Source of specimen (buccal swab)
- Test requested (Mumps PCR, under **Molecular Virology Requiring Authorization from Vermont Epidemiology, page 2**)

2. Place the completed requisition form into the outside pocket of the biohazard bag. Place the biohazard bag into the insulated shipping cooler.

3. Immediately after collection, buccal swab specimens can be refrigerated at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours. After 72 hours, these specimens should be frozen at -20°C or lower.

4. To comply with postal regulations and ensure the safety of laboratory personnel and those involved in the transport of specimens, and to maintain integrity of the sample, the VT Department of Health Laboratory will accept specimens that are packaged according to the instructions as written.

5. All samples must be shipped in accordance with all applicable local, state and federal regulations.

Please use your regular courier for transport of the specimens to the VDH Laboratory. If you do not have a courier, an Epidemiologist can assist with getting the specimen to the laboratory.

E. Specimen Rejection

- Unacceptable specimen type
- Improper shipping temperature
- Leaked in transit
- Too old to test
- No unique identifier on the specimen. The specimen must have one of the following:
 - Patient name (first and last)
 - Date of birth
 - Medical record number (MRN)
 - Submitter specimen number or ID
- Requisition/specimen patient mismatch
- No requisition form submitted with the specimen
- Cotton swab, calcium alginate swab, or wooden shafted swab are used

If you have any comments or questions regarding these instructions, please call one of the telephone numbers listed on the front of this form.

Instructions for Collecting and Shipping Specimens for Mumps rRT-PCR, Version: 3.0, MICRO-489