

**PROVINCIAL PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK**

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**Laboratory Processing and Shipping - Monkeypox Virus (MPXV) & Routine Specimens**

This communication is directed to laboratories who receive, package, and ship specimens between sites by road and air. It includes specimens for diagnosis of MPXV as well as other lab specimens where patient is known to be under investigation for MPXV.

Consult Microbiologist On-Call (MOC) for any request of MPXV testing. Collection swabs have been provided to all microbiology laboratories in the province. The ordering mnemonic is MONK.

Please see attached memo for collection and shipping of specimens for MPXV. Provide the memo upon request to any location who requests information about collecting these specimens.

**Containment and PPE**

Monkeypox virus is a Risk Group 3 (RG3) pathogen. Any specimen may contain RG3 pathogens. It is *imperative* that lab personnel strictly follow standard containment practices and routine precautions to prevent lab acquired infections. Laboratories should refer to the Laboratory Safety Manual and risk assessments such as those previously conducted in Eastern Health (under RA-062). Always use lab coat, gloves, and for droplet or aerosol hazards, extra face/eye protection. Centrifuge bucket covers and vortexing containment measures are key for preventing exposure by infectious aerosols.

**Packaging and Shipping**

Specimens for diagnosis of Monkeypox Virus (swabs or tissue) as well as routine lab specimens from patients known to be under investigation for monkeypox must be shipped according to the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (TDGR) outlined below.

Swab samples for monkeypox investigation can be shipped using refrigerated packing schemes and tissue shipped using frozen packing schemes.

Use the packing schemes set out by your region for refrigerated or frozen specimens as applicable.

Those who package specimens must hold certification in transportation of dangerous goods (TDG) road or air as appropriate or be directly supervised by a person who is certified in TDG.

**TDGR Shipping by Road:** Package specimens using UN3373, Biological Substance, Category B, using P650 (or P620 packaging) ***with an additional label stating*** “Temporary Certificate-TU 0886” in clear print on contrasting background. Please see attached template for these labels which can be printed as needed.

**TDGR Shipping by Air:** Specimens must be packaged according to requirements for shipping UN2814, Biological Substance, Category A, using P620 packaging. Eastern Health staff can refer to the Laboratory Safety Manual #8434 in Paradigm Section 9 *Transportation of Dangerous Goods*. Other RHA labs should rely on their packaging procedures.

For information on transport container ordering, contact Public Health Lab Stores department [samuel.diamond@easternhealth.ca](mailto:samuel.diamond@easternhealth.ca)

**Waste Materials**

Segregate blood, swabs, and other contaminated waste materials until confirmatory testing completed. If the patient tests positive for monkeypox virus or other Category A pathogens, package for transport according to Category A pathogens. Eastern Health staff should follow instructions in the Lab Safety Manual (section 3.3 Disposal of Laboratory Biological Waste for extreme biohazard). Notify Waste Management and Environmental Services. Waste management and the contracted waste vendor may communicate further requirements for packaging of waste materials.

