



Marion County
OREGON
Health & Human Services

ALERT

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE TO
PHARMACIES AND
PROVIDERS**

To: Providers
Fax number:

From: Marion County Communicable Disease
Fax number: 503-566-2920

Date: **7/12/2024**

Regarding: Measles

Phone number for follow-up: 503-588-5621

Dear Colleagues,

Recent reports confirm ongoing community transmission of measles amongst susceptible individuals. There are currently 2 new confirmed, and 2 suspect cases in Marion and Multnomah Counties (the suspect Multnomah case is thought to be travel-related and not linked to other cases).

Please be on the lookout for symptoms of measles among your patients: prodrome of fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis, followed a few days later by maculopapular rash that typically starts at the hairline, face, or neck, and spreads to the trunk and extremities. Please prioritize **PCR** testing at **Oregon State Public Health Lab (OSPHL)** over serologic testing and your usual clinical lab for susceptible patients with symptoms compatible with measles.

As a guide for any suspected cases: **Collect** swab, **Call** the local public health authority (LPHA), **Isolate** cases, and **Vaccinate** contacts.

Collect ALL of the following specimens when possible, listed in order of preference:

1. Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab for measles PCR. This is the preferred test for diagnosis given high sensitivity and reliability early in disease:
 1. NP swab should be collected 0–5 days after rash onset; after 5 days, NP swab should be accompanied by urine. Throat swab is also acceptable.
2. Urine for measles PCR:
 1. Urine PCR test is most sensitive 3–10 days after rash onset.
3. Serum for measles IgM and IgG testing:
 1. Measles-specific IgM antibody may not be present until ≥ 3 days after rash onset but persists for about 30 days after rash onset.
 2. A positive IgG early in illness may suggest prior immunity.

Note: If specimens are sent to reference laboratories, these tests can take multiple days to weeks to result; for faster results, PCR testing at OSPHL is strongly recommended).

Timely laboratory confirmation of measles is critical to tracking the spread and prioritizing prevention efforts. Tests for measles can be ordered from most commercial labs or through the OSPHL. Testing through the OSPHL is preferred, since it typically has a much faster turnaround time (usually within 3 days of specimen receipt). Approval is required from the Local Public Health

Authority (LPHA) for the county of residence of the patient (*note: counties in Washington State do not require approval before sending to state lab*). For testing in Oregon, refer to [this set of instructions](#), which also has a link to the OSPHL Virology/Immunology Test Request Form.

See also the [Measles Investigative Guidelines](#) for detailed information about testing.

Please see below for Specimen Collection Guidance. **Call the appropriate LPHA immediately if you suspect measles.** These tests should be ordered for patients who may have been exposed if their evaluation shows:

1. A compatible illness; AND
2. Likely susceptibility to measles

In Oregon, LPHA approval is required for PCR testing sent to OSPHL, which is the recommended lab for testing measles suspects. LPHAs may be reached 24 hours a day to report suspect cases and discuss testing:

- Marion County Public Health: 503-588-5621

Here is a helpful guide developed by CDC for testing for measles and some other vaccine-preventable diseases:

<https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/downloads/MMRV-Testing-for-Clinicians.pdf>

Thank you for your partnership,

Caroline Castillo, MD
Health Officer, Marion County Health and Human Services

