

FACT SHEET

Measles virus PCR (Rubeola)

6180

The SLO Public Health Laboratory performs a molecular amplification test for detection of Measles virus by Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) method. Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. The disease of measles and the virus that causes it share the same name. The disease is also called rubeola. Measles virus normally grows in the cells that line the back of the throat and lungs. The symptoms are fever, runny nose, cough and a rash all over the body. In children symptoms can be **Pneumonia**, a complication that is most often the cause of death in young children. **Ear infections** occur in about 1 in 10 measles cases and permanent loss of hearing can result. **Diarrhea** is reported in about 8% of cases more detailed information

Refer to www.cdc.gov

Collection: Obtain specimens as soon as possible after rash onset, up to 10 days after onset. The virus is more likely to be isolated in culture when the specimens are collected within 4 days of rash onset.

Preferred Specimens:

- **Throat Swab**

(Dacron® tip swabs with an aluminum or plastic shaft) and placed in Viral Transport Media.

Acceptable Specimens:

- **Nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate**
- **Urine Specimens**
- To collect a **urine:** Collect a first morning voided specimen during the first week after rash onset, although any urine specimen collected up to 10 days after rash onset will be accepted. Collect **50-100 ml urine** in a sterile container. **Urine specimens should be shipped and processed within 24 hours of collection.**

Storage and Transportation:

Measles virus is sensitive to heat and desiccation and viability decreases when samples are not kept cold. Specimens must be refrigerated at 4°C until they can be sent to the laboratory and must be kept cold during transit.

Specimens other than urines can be held at 4°C for 72 hours before testing.

If specimens are held for >72 hours, they should be frozen, preferably at -70°C. Avoid repeat freeze-thaw cycles.

CPT Code: 87998



San Luis Obispo County Public Health Laboratory

Phone: (805) 781-5507 Fax: (805) 781-1023 www.sloPublicHealth.org/lab

2191 Johnson Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Laboratory Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm