

Specimen Collection and Submission Instructions

Varicella zoster virus (Chicken pox) (Version 2)

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Specimen Type	Collection Time	Collection Frequency	Collection Procedures	Transport Media	Shipping & Handling (S&H)**
Vesicle/ pustule skin or crust	At illness. For optimal isolation, collect within 72 hours of symptom onset.	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanitize skin with alcohol wipe and allow to dry completely. Open and remove the top of the lesion using a sterile scalpel or 26-gauge needle. Place the vesicle or pustule skin "roof" in a dry, sterile 1.5-2 mL screw-capped plastic vial with O-ring. 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport device: See Collection Procedures for corresponding Specimen Type. Rejection criteria: Not following listed Collection and/or Shipping Methods. Transport: If transported within 24 hours of collection, package specimens from a single patient on refrigerated (2°C to 8°C) gel packs. If transported after 24 hours of collection, store specimens on dry ice or at -70°C to -20°C. (Serum may be frozen only if aliquoted.) Storage: Refrigerate (2°C to 8°C). If transported after 24 hours of collection, store specimens on dry ice or at -20°C to -70°C. (Serum may be frozen only if aliquoted.)
Swab of vesicular or pustular fluid*			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect only using synthetic tip swabs (ex. Dacron, Nylon, Polyester) with non-wooden shaft. Swab the base of an un-roofed lesion, and place in a sterile screw-capped plastic vial with O-ring. Break off swab handle and screw on cap. A dry swab is preferred for PCR. Swab in viral transport medium (VTM) may be accepted if dry swabs are not available. 	None <i>or</i> Viral Transport Medium (VTM)	
Punch Biopsy			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a 3.5- or 4-mm punch biopsy device to sample an entire lesion. Bisect the biopsied material, using sterile scissors or scalpel. Place half of the biopsied material in formalin for histopathologic and immunohistochemical evaluation. Place the other half of the biopsied material DRY in a sterile (1.5 - 2 mL) screw-capped plastic vial with O-ring (DO NOT add transport medium). 	Formalin <i>or</i> No Transport Medium (see Collection Method)	
Serum			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw blood specimens using 10 cc red or red/gray marble topped serum separator tubes with clot activator. If possible, centrifuge specimen to separate serum from blood clot, and send only serum (significant hemolysis typically occurs if serum is not separated from red blood cells on-site, prior to shipment). Minimum volume: at least 1 mL of serum. Serum may be frozen (-70°C to -20°C) if aliquoted; otherwise store at 2°C to 8°C. 	NA	

General Rejection Criteria (for additional details, see S&H)

- Unaccepted specimen type.
- Not refrigerated or frozen properly.
- Insufficient specimen volume.
- Leaky specimen.
- Swab on wooden shaft.
- Did not obtain LHJ or DOH CDE approval.
- Failure to follow specific S&H requirements.

NOTE:

Specimens will not be processed until ALL of the following information are provided on requisition form:

- Patient name, patient's county of residence, and second identifier.
- Two matching identifiers on both the tube and the laboratory requisition form.
- Specimen type, date of collection, and test requested.
- Submitter name, address, and telephone/FAX numbers.

Collection kit availability

Not available.

Comments