

# Mpox Clinician Quick Reference Guide



## TESTING FOR SUSPECT CASES

Clinicians do not need to contact KDPH for approval to test a patient or obtain approval to use commercial labs for orthopox testing. Commercial labs should be considered the first choice for PCR orthopox testing. If unsure whether the testing should be performed by a commercial lab or Kentucky Division of Laboratory Services (DLS), go ahead and obtain swabs and put in a sterile specimen container until the determination is made. This allows your patient flow to continue as normal.

## COMMERCIAL LABS

- Several commercial labs ([Labcorp](#), [Quest](#), [ARUP](#), [Aegis](#), [Sonic](#), [Mayo Clinic](#), and others) are able to process swabs for PCR testing for orthopox virus.
- There is variability among commercial labs about specimen collection, handling, transport media, submission, and CPT coding.
- It is very important to visit the website of the commercial lab before testing to get their most recent guidance.

## STATE DLS

Clinicians should only send specimens to the Kentucky Division of Laboratory Services (DLS) after prior KDPH Epidemiology approval by calling 888-9REPORT (888-973-7678).

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR SENDING TO DLS:

- When a vulnerable population is involved.
- In cases of severe disease.

## IF APPROVED FOR DLS TESTING:

- Collect two swabs per lesion and swab a total of 2-3 lesions per patient (preferably from different areas of the body). Scrub the base of the lesion vigorously. Do not unroof the lesion. Skin cells are needed for testing, not fluid.
- Providers request swabs free of charge by filing out a [requisition form](#) for supplies and emailing it to [dphlabkits@ky.gov](mailto:dphlabkits@ky.gov)
- Test requests should be ordered in the DLS Outreach system, with test code MVPCR. If Outreach access is unavailable, you may complete the [Special Microbiology Requisition Form 219](#).
- Submit an [EPID 200 Form](#).



To find out where to refer eligible patients for an mpox vaccine.



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## WHAT IS MPOX

Mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) is the disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus.

## CLINICAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Often starts with fever, swollen lymph nodes, malaise, headache, chills, or muscle aches. Symptoms start between 5-21 days after exposure.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF RASH LESIONS

- Firm or rubbery
- Well-circumscribed
- Deep-seated
- Often develop umbilication
- They can be macular, papular, vesicular, or pustular and typically scab over within 2-3 weeks before falling off

The illness generally lasts 2-4 weeks. Patients are considered infectious when symptoms are present and until lesions have scabbed with a layer of fresh skin visible after the scab has fallen off. Other common infections should be considered if risk factors are not consistent with the outbreak.



**FOR MORE INFO  
SCAN THE QR CODE  
OR VISIT:**

<https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/hab/Pages/Self-testing-for-HIV.aspx>

**ALL PATIENTS WHO ARE DETERMINED TO NEED TESTING BY A COMMERCIAL LAB OR STATE DLS SHOULD BE GIVEN:** Isolation Guidelines and advised to isolate until test results are available to prevent possible spread of disease.

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## Mpox Testing Guidelines



This guidance is intended for health care providers to utilize when conducting tests for mpox in patients. By following these guidelines, providers can ensure they are using the most effective testing methods.

### WHO TO TEST



- Testing is recommended if a patient has a rash consistent with mpox.
- The mpox rash can differ between patients. It can be papular, vesicular, or pustular.
- Mpox is actively circulating, so be sure to consider the diagnosis in patients with a rash.

### HOW TO TEST

- Use only sterile, synthetic (e.g. polyester, nylon, or Dacron) swabs.
- **DO NOT** use cotton-tipped swabs. NP swabs are **NOT** preferred.
- Collect two swabs per lesion and swab a total of 2-3 lesions per patient.
- Swab **vigorously** to improve the chance of viral detection. Do not unroof lesions. The goal is to collect skin cells. The main cause of indeterminate tests is that not enough skin cells are obtained on the swab to perform test.
- Wear gloves, gown, eye protection, and a respirator with an N95 or higher filter while collecting samples.



### WHERE TO SEND THE TEST



- Specimens can be sent to a commercial lab or to the state DLS lab.
- To submit to the state lab, first call 888-9REPORT (888-973-7678) to discuss. When submitting to the state DLS lab store dry swabs in the freezer until transport. Do not send in viral transport medium.
- Multiple commercial labs offer orthopoxvirus testing. You can search for these online. Please follow the collection guidelines for the commercial lab you plan to use.



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