





Memorandum Micro #244

To: UNC Health Attending Physicians, Faculty Practice Physicians, Housestaff, Clinical Nurse Coordinators, Department Heads and Supervisors

From:  Melissa B. Miller, MD
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Date: March 20, 2025

Subject: Update to Mpox Testing

Beginning March 24, 2025, UNC Medical Center (UNCMC) McLendon Clinical Laboratories will offer Mpox PCR testing in-house instead of referring specimens to LabCorp. The EPIC order code (LAB192403) and specimen collection are unchanged. The turnaround time will be 24h from receipt of the specimen in the laboratory. The new test (Xpert Mpox test, Cepheid) is authorized for use under FDA Emergency Use Authorization. The test detects non-variola *Orthopoxvirus* (NVO) DNA (i.e., mpox, vaccinia, cowpox viruses). It does not detect variola virus, which causes smallpox. In addition, the test detects Mpox, clade II DNA. Samples that are positive for NVO but negative for Mpox, clade II will be forwarded to the NC State Laboratory of Public Health for additional testing.

Affiliate hospitals and offsite locations that routinely use McLendon Laboratories should use their regular workflow to route specimens to UNCMC. Outpatient locations using a different reference laboratory (e.g., LabCorp) should continue using that reference laboratory. On-campus locations should hand deliver specimens to the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory specimen window. Do not use the tube station at the medical center.

Detailed specimen collection instructions can be found at these websites:

[UNCMC Mpox Test Webpage](#)
[Mpox Specimen Collection Flyer](#)

In brief, the red-capped double swab transport device (Lawson # 053686) should be used. Vigorously swab or brush the base of the lesion with each of the two swabs and return the swabs to the transport tube. Both swabs should be submitted to ensure adequate material is

sampled. If multiple lesions with differing appearances are present, consider submitting additional swabs, as described above, for each lesion.

The same swab(s) can be used for HSV and/or VZV PCR testing at UNCMC.

Contact Dr. Melissa Miller at Melissa.Miller@unchealth.unc.edu with any questions.