

Testing for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

PCR Testing is important if you suspect a Vaccine-Preventable Disease (VPD), such as measles, mumps, varicella or pertussis. It is important to have an accurate diagnosis to prevent the spread of disease.

If you suspect a reportable VPD, or need assistance, contact your regional Health Department and ask for the epidemiology department.

Midlands: 888-801-1046

Lowcountry: 843-441-1091

Pee Dee: 843-915-8886

Upstate: 864-372-3133

Measles

- Measles cases have increased in the U.S. as vaccination rates decline.

If you suspect measles, confirm the diagnosis with a PCR swab (throat or NP).*

Mumps

- Parotitis: Not all parotitis is mumps and parotitis occurs in only 31-65% of mumps cases¹.

If you suspect mumps, confirm the diagnosis with a PCR swab (buccal).*

Varicella

- 50% of visual diagnoses are not true varicella cases².

Confirm the diagnosis with a PCR swab (lesion).*

Pertussis

- If a patient has a cough for more than two weeks, consider testing for pertussis.

PCR testing is the gold standard for diagnosis. Serology tests are not useful in diagnosis.



¹ <https://www.immunize.org/wp-content/uploads/catg.d/p4211.pdf>

² Ruprecht A, Marin M, Strain AK, Harry K, Kenyon C. Notes from the Field: Expanded Laboratory Testing for Varicella — Minnesota, 2016–2023. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2024;73:245–246.

* PCR testing is available for most VPDs at the South Carolina Public Health Laboratory (PHL); please call your regional health department prior to collection.

Scan to learn
more about
VPD testing
from the CDC:

