

## Confirming diagnosis of Measles

Clinicians are required to notify all cases of suspected measles (based on clinical and epidemiological features) to the local health protection unit.

### Which sample should I send?

This depends on at what stage of illness patient is at the time of acquiring a sample. Remember measles is notifiable disease and clinicians should do this based on clinical suspicion.

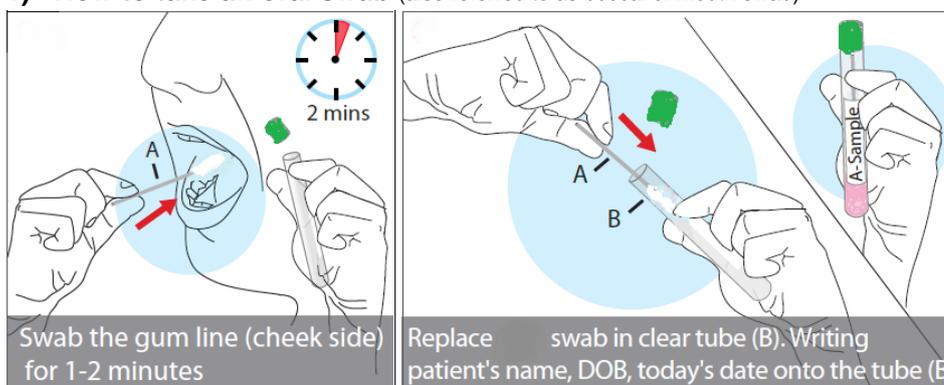
#### a) Acute Phase (Within 7 days of symptom onset)

The best approach in this phase is to look for the virus itself at a place where it is most likely to be present. *Measles RNA detection by PCR* in an oral swab soaked in saliva is the test of choice.



Only a viral swab can be processed which usually has a green top

### 1) How to take an oral swab (also referred to as buccal or mouth swab)



### 2) How to request test:

Request test via your local electronic requesting system (e.g. ICE). This could exist under various names (measles RNA, measles PCR or measles molecular test). In Sheffield this appears as below and can be brought up by searching:

**Measles PCR (Mouth swab)**

(Where electronic systems do not exist, use paper request forms, filling all relevant details)

All requests should include information about: symptoms, date of onset of symptoms, MMR vaccinations status and if they have exposed other individuals.

### 3) Transport to Lab:

Measles RNA by PCR is done at Virology department Northern General Hospital, Sheffield. Use your existing mechanisms to send samples to Microbiology department

#### b) Post-acute Phase (after 7 days of symptom onset)

By this time, the body's immune system has successfully mounted responses to start clearing the infection. The test of choice where 7 or more days have elapsed is IgM & IgG antibodies against measles. Measles RNA is not likely to be present by this time.

#### 1. How to request test:

Measles IgM testing is no longer done at Virology department, Northern General hospital. Where this is deemed to be essential, please contact Medical Virology on ext 66477

Request test via your local electronic requesting system (e.g. ICE). In Sheffield this appears as below and can be brought up by searching:



(Where electronic systems do not exist, use paper request forms, filling all relevant details)

All requests should include information about: symptoms, date of onset of symptoms, MMR vaccinations status and if they have exposed other individuals. [This helps us with contact tracing and assessing significance of positive/negative results.](#)

#### 2. Transport to Lab:

Measles IgG tests are still done at Virology department Northern General Hospital, Sheffield. Use your existing mechanisms to send samples to Microbiology department