

Controlling the Spread of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

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The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Immunization Program plays a vital role in controlling the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) in this county. Surveillance for VPDs requires the collaboration of public health professionals, health care providers, and laboratories. All suspect and confirmed cases among residents of Los Angeles County should be reported to the Communicable Disease Reporting System by telephone, (888) 397-3993, or fax, (888) 397-3778. After hours, report to (213) 974-1234. Cases among residents of Long Beach, (562) 570-4302, or Pasadena, (626) 744-6000, should be reported to their respective city health departments.

Appropriate laboratory testing is essential for accurate diagnosis and to rule out other possible causes of disease. If an assessment of immune status is necessary, only an IgG assay (not IgM) should be ordered.

The following table summarizes the reporting requirements and confirmatory laboratory tests for select vaccine-preventable diseases. If you have questions on reporting or lab testing, contact the Immunization Program at (213) 351-7800. 

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Disease	Reporting Requirements	Confirmatory Tests	Other Notes
Diphtheria	Immediately by phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture (swab of nose, throat, membrane) Toxicogenicity testing (Elek test) 	Use tellurite-containing media
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> , invasive disease	Report cases among persons <15 years of age within 1 working day of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture from a normally sterile site (blood, CSF) Serotyping 	All sterile isolates should be sent to the Public Health Lab for serotyping
Hepatitis B (perinatal)	Within 7 calendar days of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-HBc (antibody to core antigen) HBsAg (surface antigen) Anti-HBs (antibody to surface antigen) 	All 3 tests should be performed. HBsAg-positive results should also be confirmed by HBsAg neutralization assay
Measles	Within 1 working day of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IgM or Paired sera for IgG 	Specimens for culture/PCR can also be collected (throat, nasopharyngeal, urine)
Mumps	Within 7 calendar days of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture (buccal) IgM or Paired sera for IgG 	Massage the parotid gland area for 30 seconds prior to swab collection. Use a Dacron (non-cotton) swab
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Within 1 working day of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture (nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate) PCR 	Use Dacron (non-cotton) swab and Regan-Lowe media. Serologic results are not currently accepted as lab confirmation
Poliovirus, paralytic	Within 1 working day of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture (stool, pharynx, or CSF) Paired sera for IgG 	Immediately transport to lab at 4°C or maintain culture specimens frozen
Rubella (acute and congenital)	Within 7 calendar days of identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IgM or Paired sera for IgG Culture/PCR (nasopharyngeal, throat, urine) 	Immediately transport to lab at 4°C or maintain culture/PCR specimens frozen (except urine)
Tetanus	Within 7 calendar days of identification	None	There are no lab findings characteristic of tetanus
Varicella (chickenpox)	<p>Fatal cases: Immediately by phone</p> <p>Hospitalized cases: Within 7 calendar days of identification</p> <p>Outbreaks: Routinely ≥ 5 cases within 21 days, but ≥ 2 cases in sensitive settings such as health facilities, prisons, or long-term care facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture PCR DFA Paired sera for IgG 	Preferred specimen for culture/PCR/DFA is fluid from vesicles