

Division of Laboratory Medicine

Molecular Microbiology

Varicella-zoster virus PCR

Chickenpox, Shingles, Encephalitis, meningitis, rash, lesion

General information

Specimen container: CE marked leak proof container

Specimen type: EDTA blood, CSF, Swabs, Viterous tap

Specimen transport: Ambient or refrigerated

Compliance with current postal and transportation regulations is essential

Clinical samples should be collected into a sterile leak-proof container in a sealed plastic bag. Appropriate hazard labelling according to local policy should be applied. Specimens should be transported and processed as soon as possible.

Minimum volume of sample: Minimum volume 500µl

Special precautions: If processing is delayed, refrigeration is preferable to storage at room temperature.

Laboratory information

Measurement units: Threshold Cycle (CT)

Turnaround time for provisional result (working days): 3 days

Turnaround time to final result (working days): 4 days

Clinical information

Clinical decision points: Not applicable

Factors known to significantly affect the results: All samples are suitable for overnight refrigeration only, they must not be stored over a weekend

False negative results may occur for a variety of reasons, for example inappropriate timing of sample collection, inappropriate sample, presence of virus below the detectable limit of the assay. New and emerging variants may also occur which may not be detected by this assay. Towards the limit of detection of an assay sampling variation will result in lower reproducibility.

(Last updated December 2014)