



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
State Laboratory of Public Health

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NCSLPH Frequently Asked Questions regarding Ebola Virus Testing

1. Where can I find North Carolina's latest guidance?

The latest guidance is posted on the NCSLPH website at <http://slph.ncpublichealth.com/>. Other useful information can be found on the CDC's Ebola response page at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/index.html>

2. What is the process for submitting specimens to NCSLPH?

Refer to the latest guidance posted (<http://slph.ncpublichealth.com/>) and contact the Communicable Disease Branch 24/7 number at 919-733-3419 to determine if testing is warranted, discuss laboratory testing and control measures.

3. What are the testing times for which Ebola is conducted at the NCSLPH? Is there a cut off on Fridays for weekend testing?

Testing for Ebola Zaire at the NCSLPH is conducted on an emergency response basis 24/7 when accepted after consultation.

4. How many and what type of samples do I collect and send?

Collect two (2) 4-mL purple top plastic EDTA tubes, labeled with patient name/ID#, date of birth, and collection date and send to NCSLPH. NCSLPH will send the 2nd tube on to CDC. Glass tubes will not be accepted.

5. What are the Packaging and Shipping requirements for Ebola Zaire test samples?

Samples must be triple packaged with a rigid outer UN Certified container (i.e., Saf-T-Pak STP-100), correctly labeled and with appropriate paperwork ... NO EXCEPTIONS !!!

a. Primary container must be leak-proof and sealed, surrounded by absorbent material and cushioned.

Example: purple top tube (glass tubes prohibited), sealed with parafilm and wrapped by absorbent material placed inside sealed biohazard zip lock bag then surrounded by bubble wrap.

b. Secondary container must also be leak-proof and can be rigid or flexible, also contain absorbent material, and labeled with a Biohazard label. **NOTE:** Purple top tubes for Ebola testing require transport on ice packs. We recommend using a small ice pack sealed inside a leak-proof zip lock baggie inside the secondary

www.ncdhhs.gov • www.publichealth.nc.gov • <http://slph.ncpublichealth.com>

Location: 4312 District Drive • Raleigh, NC 27607 • Tel 919-733-7834 • Fax 919-733-8695

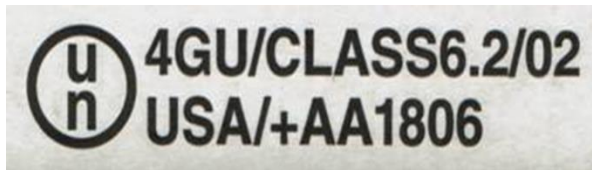
Mailing Address: 1918 Mail Service Center • PO Box 28047, Raleigh, NC 27611-8047

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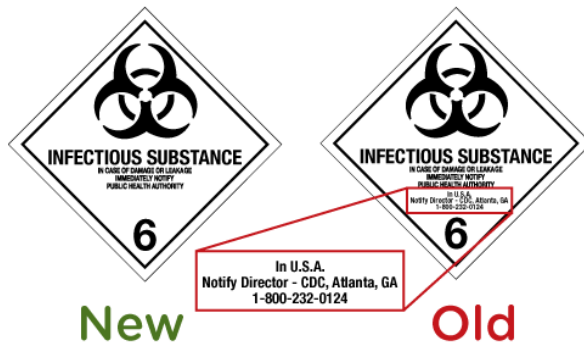


container. There should be room in the Category A shippers for this small ice pack as well as the bubble wrap provided.

- c. **Outer package** must be rigid and have the UN certification stamp on the box! Ensure the secondary container will not be moving around inside the outer box. Must have itemized list of contents between secondary and outer packaging such as our testing requisition form.
- d. Outside of package **must** be labeled with the following: UN Certification stamp (printed on box), The new infectious substance hazard label (effective October 1, 2014), UN 2814 “Infectious Substance, Affecting Humans” (printed on box), Shipper name and address of where sample originated, Responsible Person (Shipper) and 24/7 phone, Consignee name and address of where sample is going, Orientation arrows (printed on shipper)



UN 2814
Infectious Substance
Affecting Humans



- e. Must include a properly filled out Shippers Declaration form for transport of ALL Cat A samples, as well as a BTEP test requisition form, CDC DASH form, and Viral Special Pathogens Branch Diagnostic Specimen Submission form (placed between secondary and outer package).

6. Would you prefer we work with a courier system to hand deliver specimens or would you prefer FedEx specimens?

First, the NC State Courier system will NOT be used to transport potential Ebola specimens. The most rapid method must be used. If you have an immediately available courier certified to transport Category A agents, use it. Otherwise, we will coordinate with a certified commercial courier. Our last choice would be an overnight shipper due to time.

7. What is the expected Turnaround Time from receipt of an Ebola Zaire specimen to completion of results?

The estimated turnaround time for presumptive results is 6 hours for a single specimen and up to 24 hours for multiple specimens. All specimens tested at NCSLPH will also be forwarded to CDC for more extensive laboratory testing.

8. Where can I find more information about the assay that is being used for Ebola Zaire testing?

For complete information on the FDA Emergency Use Authorization Ebola Zaire (EZ1) rRT-PCR (TaqMan®) Assay, see:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/MedicalDevices/Safety/EmergencySituations/UCM408334.pdf>

9. What type of personal protective equipment (PPE) do laboratorians working with clinical specimens from patients suspected of having Ebola need to wear?

Clinical laboratories should employ their regular use of PPE following Universal Standard Precautions where all patient samples are treated as possibly infectious. At a minimum, this should include gloves, impervious gowns, mask and goggles or face shield. NCSLPH recommends conducting a risk assessment for your facility.

Remember, a biological safety cabinet (BSC) offers the first line of defense against any aerosolization or spill. If one is not available, a splash guard/shield should be used. For further information, please see:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/interim-guidance-specimen-collection-submission-patients-suspected-infection-ebola.html> and https://apps.health.ny.gov/pub/ctrldocs/alrtview/postings/Notification_17301.pdf

10. How do I obtain the CDC DASH form?

Here are the links to the DASH and instructions. <http://slph.ncpublichealth.com/Forms/CDC-Dash-NCSLPH-013114.pdf>. If you choose test name (Ebola identification), Test order code self-populates. Instructions are also available on NCSLPH website.