

Rashes with Potential Respiratory Transmission

Central Zone

Date: February 7, 2025

To: Acute Care Physicians and Nurse Practitioners; Rural Family Medicine Residents; Nursing and Triage Staff of Inpatient Units, Ambulatory and Urgent Care, and Emergency Departments

Copy: Workplace Health and Safety; Medical Affairs; Senior Operating Officers; Regional Area Directors; Emergency Medical Services; Communicable Disease Control (Notifiable Disease and Outbreak Teams); Medical Officers of Health (zone and provincial)

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Subject: Central Zone IPC Recommendations Regarding Additional Precautions and Testing for Rashes with Potential Respiratory Transmission

Patients may present with, or develop, a new or unexpected RASH, which could be non-infectious or infectious. Possible infectious causes with potential respiratory transmission include, but are not limited to, varicella (chickenpox), zoster (shingles), measles, Mpox, and *Neisseria meningitidis*. **Many of these infections require additional precautions.**

- Follow the algorithm [Rash: Assessing the Need for Additional Precautions \(Isolation\)](#) to determine and implement precautions based on stage of diagnosis.
- Ask patients to perform hand hygiene and don a surgical or procedure mask.
- Document the rash in the Communicable Disease Screen and indicate if the patient performed respiratory hygiene.
- The most responsible clinician should order clinically indicated tests:
 - measles: nasopharyngeal swab and urine for PCR, and IgM and IgG serology
 - herpes simplex, varicella, zoster, and Mpox: swab lesion with a viral flocculated swab and place in Universal Transport Media (UTM) container (red or white capped tube with pink-colored liquid)

If measles or Mpox is suspected, contact the Central Zone Medical Officer of Health on-call at 403-356-6430.

Please contact your site infection control professional (ICP) with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for assistance with infection control.

Additional Resources

[IPC Acute Care Resource Manual, Diseases & Conditions Table](#)

[Alberta Precision Laboratories \(APL\) Test Directory](#)

[Sample Type and Collection Guidelines for Herpes Simplex Virus \(HSV\) and Varicella Zoster Virus \(VZV\) Testing](#), Education Resources, [Public Health Laboratory \(ProvLab\)](#)

[Alberta Notifiable Diseases Guidelines](#)