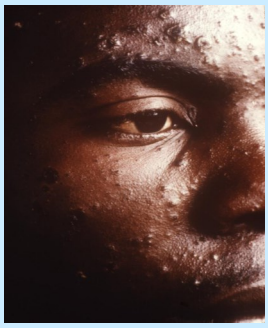
Varicella (Chickenpox) Clinical Guidelines

Chickenpox is a highly contagious febrile rash illness caused by primary infection with varicella-zoster virus (VZV)

Confirmed Case:

An acute illness with maculo-papulovesicular rash and epidemiologic link to another confirmed case or laboratory confirmation. Unvaccinated person with 200-400 lesions.



Photos: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

OR

Probable Case:

An acute illness with maculo-papulovesicular rash and ***lack of*** epidemiologic link to another confirmed or probable case or ***lack of*** laboratory confirmation.

Breakthrough Case:

Vaccinated cases that are milder, less contagious, have lower fever and fewer lesions (<50). Lesions are often maculopapular instead of vesicular. Atypical appearance often leads to misdiagnosis. Consider laboratory confirmation given atypical appearance.

Photo: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Contact the health department if you identify any case of chicken pox

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

PCR—PREFERRED TESTING METHOD

- Also called *Probe Amplification Target or Nucleic Acid Amplification Test* (NAAT)
- Sensitivity and Specificity is very high

For more information about collecting specimens go to: https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/

AND

REPORT TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Complete the : CDPH Case Report Forms

Fax Form To: (312) - 746-6388

Questions: (312) - 746-9867

Suspect Cases should be reported within 24hrs

Do not wait for laboratory confirmation

Sign up for electronic reporting through the Illinois National Electronic Disease & Surveillance System (I-NEDSS)
http://portalhome.dph.illinois.gov/

HERPES ZOSTER VIRUS (SHINGLES):

Characterized by vesicular lesions in one dermatome. Many labs automatically report + VZV PCRs to the health department. Talk to your lab about filtering out shingles results so they are not reported to CDPH.

Shingles is not a reportable disease.

Photo: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

HEALTHY CHICAGO
CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

CDC GUIDELINES: HOW TO SAMPLE SUSPECTED VARICELLA LESIONS

Method	GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTION	PROCESSING/STORAGE
Polyester Swab Method 	• Un-roof the top of the vesicle with sterile needle • Use sterile swab to collect epithelial cells and vesicular fluid from the base of the lesion. • Do not use a cotton swab	• Place swabs individually directly into tubes • Dry specimens should be stored at ambient temperature • Dry specimens should not be frozen or refrigerated
Glass Slide Method	• Rake the edge of the slide over the lesion with vigor • Use a sterile swab to collect material on the slide and to scrub the abraded lesion	• Insert the swab into a tube and close it • Dry maculopapular lesion material is stable for several weeks at ambient temperature
Collecting Crusts	• Lift crust off of skin	• Place crust into break-resistant snap cap or screw top tube

VARICELLA TESTING TIPS

Serology (whole blood) - IgM and IgG detects viral antibodies and can only be used to classify a case as 'probable'. Test results can be false negative. This method is not recommended.

- Specimens should be collected within 5 days of rash onset
- Get samples from 2 lesions (Swabs must be placed individually in separate tubes to avoid contamination)
- Send to commercial lab immediately

Lab	Processing/Storage	Client Services
ACL	♦ ***Use*** Skin Swabs, Crust or Scrapings to collect from vesicular lesion ♦ ***Use*** eSwab Collection Kit or Universal Transport Medium (UTM) (as shown on right)  ♦ ***Use*** the ACL Supply Form to order UTM or eSwab collection kits ♦ Keep refrigerated up to 72 hours ♦ ACL VZV Specimen Requirements	(800) 877-7016
ARUP	♦ ***Use*** Fluid, Swab, Crust or Skin Scrapings ♦ ***Use*** Universal Transport Medium (UTM) (as shown on right)  ♦ ***Use*** the Arup Supply Form to order UTM tubes ♦ Keep Refrigerated up to 48 hours, ambient unacceptable ♦ Arup Lab VZV Specimen Requirements	(800) 522-2787
LabCorp	♦ ***Use*** Vesicular fluid, Crust or Scrapings ♦ ***Use*** Universal Transport Medium (UTM) (as shown on right)  ♦ Indicate Exact Specimen source on the requisition form ♦ Keep refrigerated to 14 days ♦ LabCorp VZV Specimen Requirements	(888) 522-2677
Quest Diagnostics	♦ ***Use*** Swab or Crust to collect fluid and cells from vesicular lesion ♦ ***Use*** Viral Transport Medium (as shown on right)  ♦ ***Use*** Quest Connect to order supplies ♦ Keep cold up to 72 hours ♦ Quest Diagnostics VZV Specimen Requirements	(866) 697-8378