

MLS Laboratory Update: Resumption of Powassan and Jamestown Canyon Virus Testing for the 2025 Season

APRIL 15, 2025

Purpose of this Message:

To alert clinical laboratory partners that Powassan and Jamestown Canyon virus testing has resumed at the Minnesota Department of Health-Public Health Laboratory (MDH-PHL).

Action Item:

Inform all relevant personnel in your facility that Powassan and Jamestown Canyon virus testing for the 2025 season is now available at MDH-PHL.

Background:

With the arrival of spring, seasonal testing for the tick-borne Powassan virus (POW) and the mosquito-borne Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV) by Enzyme Immunoassay (EIA) has resumed at the MDH-PHL. Clinicians should be aware that Powassan or Jamestown Canyon viral infections may be present when evaluating a patient with encephalitis once outdoor temperatures are above 40°F.

Seasonal testing for West Nile and other mosquito-borne viruses is still pending for 2025. A future MLS message will be issued when MDH resumes testing for these viruses.

More information about POW can be found at [Powassan Virus Disease \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/powassan/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/powassan/index.html) and for JCV can be found at [Jamestown Canyon Virus Disease \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/jcv/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/jcv/index.html).

Additional Information:

Specimen Requirements:

- Information regarding acceptable specimen types can be found on the [MN Dept. of Health: Infectious Disease Laboratory \(IDL\) Test Catalog \(https://labinventory.web.health.state.mn.us/#/\)](https://labinventory.web.health.state.mn.us/#/)
 - 1 mL of serum
 - 2 mL CSF
- Please ship specimens on cold packs (2-8°C) within 48 hours of collection. If shipping will be delayed, please freeze specimens and ship to MDH frozen.

- Please **provide symptom onset dates** when requesting serology testing for the arboviruses in the *Date of Symptom Onset* section of the General Infectious Disease Laboratory Submission Form.
 - For the most up to date submission form, please see [Forms for the Infectious Disease Laboratory \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html)
- If any arbovirus testing was performed on the specimen at a different lab, please include the test and the results in the comments section of the submission form.

If travel-associated arboviral infections, such as Zika, dengue, or chikungunya, are suspected or if you have additional questions about arboviral disease, please contact MDH Epidemiology at 651-201-5414.

For more information about arboviruses, please see [Vectorborne Diseases \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/vectorborne/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/vectorborne/index.html).

Questions: Please contact:

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5200.