**Lab Dept:** Microbiology/Virology

**Test Name:** VARICELLA ZOSTER (VZV) PCR, MISCELLANEOUS SITES

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| **Phone Numbers:** | MIN Lab: 612-813-6280  
STP Lab: 651-220-6550 |
| **Test Availability:** | Daily, 24 hours |
| **Turnaround Time:** | 1 - 4 days, performed Monday - Saturday |
| **Special Instructions:** | Specimen must be collected under sterile conditions. |

**Specimen**
**Specimen Type:**
Body Fluid (spinal, pleural, peritoneal, ascites, pericardial, amniotic, or ocular); Swab (dermal, eye, nasal, or throat); Genital Swab (cervix, vagina, urethra, anal/rectal, or other genital sources); Respiratory (bronchial washing, bronchoalveolar lavage, nasopharyngeal aspirate or washing, sputum, or tracheal aspirate); Tissue (brain, colon, kidney, liver, lung, etc.)

**Container:**
Body Fluid: Sterile container
Swab: Multimicrobe media (M4-RT, M4, or M5) and ESwabs
Genital Swab: Multimicrobe media (M4-RT [T605], M4, or M5) and ESwabs
Respiratory: Sterile container
Tissue: Multimicrobe media (M4-RT [T605], M4, or M5) preferred or sterile container with 1 to 2 mL of sterile saline.

**Draw Volume:**
Body Fluid: 0.5 mL
Respiratory: 1.5 mL
Swab: Entire collection
Tissue: Entire collection

**Collection:**
Routine collection specific to specimen type

**Special Processing:**
Lab Staff:
- **Body Fluid:** Aliquot 0.5 mL (Minimum: 0.3 mL) fluid into a sterile container, store and ship at refrigerated temperatures. Do not centrifuge.
- **Dermal/eye/nasal/throat/genital:** Culture transport swab in multimicrobe media should be stored and shipped at refrigerated temperatures.
- **Respiratory:** Aliquot 1.5 mL (Minimum: 1 mL) respiratory specimen into a sterile container, store and ship at refrigerated temperatures.
- **Tissue:** Place entire collection of fresh tissue into multimicrobe media (preferred) or into sterile container with 1 to 2 mL of sterile saline. Store and ship at refrigerated temperatures.

**Patient Preparation:**
None

**Sample Rejection:**
Room temperature specimens; mislabeled or unlabeled specimens; calcium alginate-tipped swab, wood swab, or transport swab containing gel; formalin-fixed and/or paraffin-embedded tissues

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**Interpretive**

**Reference Range:**
Negative (Reference values apply to all ages)

**Critical Values:**
N/A

**Limitations:**
A negative result does not exclude the possibility of varicella-zoster virus (VZV) infection.

The reference range is typically "negative" for this assay. This assay is only to be used for patients with a clinical history and symptoms consistent with VZV infection and must be interpreted in the context of the clinical picture.

This test should not used to screen asymptomatic patients.
Methodology: Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)/ DNA Probe Hybridization

References: Mayo Medical Laboratories December 2022

Updates: 3/6/2013: Title change and expansion to other specimen types, previously only spinal fluid.
1/26/2018: Expanded list of acceptable fluid types
10/31/2019: Updated dermal/eye/genital swabs to be sent in VTM on a temporary basis for specimen comparison saves.
12/20/2022: Testing transitions to a new performing laboratory within Mayo Clinic to streamline processes of molecular microbiology.