

From: Laurel Glaser MD, PhD
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Re: Change in Methodology for the Molecular Detection of Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV)

Effective immediately, the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania will implement the Simplexa VZV Direct test for molecular detection of Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) from skin lesions, mucocutaneous lesions, and CSF. This test replaces the current in-house VZV lesion testing and the send-out VZV CSF testing. Sample collection, volume requirements, and ordering through PennChart remains unchanged and information can be found in the Lab Test Services Guide.

Lesions: [University of Pennsylvania Health System | Tests \(testmenu.com\)](#)

CSF: [University of Pennsylvania Health System | Tests \(testmenu.com\)](#)

Test Characteristics:

The Simplexa VZV Direct is a real-time PCR assay that enables the direct amplification and detection of VZV DNA without nucleic acid extraction. The assay utilizes fluorescent probes together with corresponding forward and reverse primers to detect VZV and internal control targets. A well-conserved region of the VZV DNA polymerase gene is targeted to identify VZV DNA in the specimen. An internal control is used to detect PCR failure and/or inhibition.

Please call the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory with questions (215-662-3406)