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PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU REGIONAL OFFICE OF THE
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Division of Vaccines and Immunization
Expanded Program on Immunization
Measles Surveillance in the Americas

Weekly Bulletin for the week
ending 30 October 1999

HANDLING OF LABORATORY SAMPLES FOR VIRUS ISOLATION FOR MEASLES ERADICATION AND RUBELLA CONTROL

Storage and transport of samples for measles virus:

- 50-100 ml of urine should be taken and refrigerated at 4-8 C° until it can be centrifuged.
- Ideally, all urine samples should be cold before centrifugation.
- The urine should be centrifuged, ideally on the same day it was taken, at 1500 RPM (about 500 x g) for 5 minutes. A refrigerated centrifuge is **not** a requirement.
- The pellet should be immediately re-suspended in 0.5-2 ml of viral transport media (VTM)*.
- In the field, centrifuged urine and nasopharyngeal swab specimens can be refrigerated at 4-8 C° for up to five days until they can be stored in a -70 or -40 C° freezer.
- As soon as possible, the sample should be sent to a laboratory equipped with -70 or 40 C° freezers. **Because of the risk of damaging the viruses, samples should never be kept at -20 C°.**
- When samples are ready to be sent to the national laboratory, they should be shipped in coolers with ice packs.
- In the case of samples that have been frozen at -70 or -40 C°, they must be shipped in dry ice to the national laboratory.
- If for any reason centrifugation is not possible, **the urine can still be shipped immediately to the national laboratory in coolers with ice packs.** It might still be viable for virus isolation if it reaches the laboratory within five days from the day it was taken.
- For suspect rubella cases a nasopharyngeal swab should be taken; the swab should not be centrifuged. It should be placed in a sterile tube with 0.5-2ml of VTM.

* VTM should be made available to all health centers by the national laboratory of each country. VTM usually contains sterile phosphate buffered saline (PBS) or suitable isotonic solution such as Hank's BSS, etc., containing antibodies (100 units/ml penicillin, or 100 µg/ml streptomycin) and either 2% fetal bovine serum or 0.5% gelatin in 15 ml polycarbonate or polystyrene centrifuge tubes.

All health centers in coordination with the surveillance supervisors should identify the nearest facility where urine samples can be centrifuged!!!

Table No. 1
 Classification of Suspected Measles Cases
 for the period: 99/01 - 99/43

Region	Country	Suspected Cases Reported	Under Investigation	Discarded			Confirmed Cases 1999			Confirmed Cases 1998		
				Rubella	Dengue	Other/Unknown	Clinic.	Lab.	Total	Week 43	Total	
AND	BOL	1,702	86	2	0	288	124	1,202	1,326	572	1,004	
	COL	999	14	23	17	910	25	10	35	62	104	
	ECU	496	2	176	2	316	0	0	0	0	0	
	PER	240	14	40	2	182	2	0	2	7	10	
	VEN	333	10	43	10	270	0	0	0	4	4	
BRA	BRA	22,553	6,433	4,020	0	11,418	411	271	682	1,981	2,930	
CAP	COR	177	11	0	0	136	3	27	30	0	20	
	ELS	78	0	6	2	70	0	0	0	0	0	
	GUT	167	11	87	0	69	0	0	0	1	1	
	HON	137	0	64	21	52	0	0	0	0	0	
CAR	NIC	783	0	372	4	407	0	0	0	0	0	
	PAN	97	25	8	5	59	0	0	0	0	0	
	CAR	247	85	16	11	135	0	0	0	1	1	
	LAC	CUB	979	371	608	0	0	0	0	0
	DOR	1,587	165	160	0	1,150	2	110	112	3	15	
	FGU	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	GUA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
MEX	HAI	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	3	3	
	MAR	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	PUR	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
	MEX	40	16	12	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	
NOA	CAN	9	...	...	...	...	...	9	9	11	12
	USA	79	...	...	...	...	...	79	79	79	89
SOC	ARG	859	130	26	...	465	...	238	238	7,054	10,229	
	CHI	211	17	14	0	151	0	29	29	0	6	
	PAR	249	3	13	7	226	0	0	0	69	70	
	URU	34	0	0	0	0	0	34	34	1	4	

TOTAL	32,069	7,393	5,082	81	16,937	567	2,009	2,576	9,848	14,504
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... No report received

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Table No. 2

Measles Suspect Cases Under Investigation for the period: 99/01 - 99/43

Region	Country	Pending cases from 1998	Cumulative 1999	Week of Rash Onset															
				1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-24	25-28	29-32	33-36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
AND	BOL	0	86	...	...	1	8	15	...	6	4	5	4	...	2	12	4	7	18
	COL	0	14	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	4	3	1	0	...
	ECU	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
	PER	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	VEN	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	...
BRA CAP	BRA	0	6,433	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	COR	0	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	ELS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	GUT	0	11	0	0	0	0	...	...	8	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	HON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAR LAC	NIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	PAN	0	25	...	1	1	0	1	6	1	14	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	CAR	0	85	2	2	3	3	2	13	10	11	10	5	9	11	4	0	...	...
	CUB	0	371	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...	...	...	...
	DOR	0	165	4	15	0	3	35	11	...	23	72	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	FGU	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	GUA	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	HAI	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	MAR	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	PUR	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MEX NOA	MEX	0	16	0	2	2	3	5	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	CAN	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	USA	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SOC	ARG	0	130	29	9	18	16	7	19	13	5	2	4	4	4	0	0	0	
	CHI	0	17	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	
	PAR	0	3	0	0	...	...	...	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	URU	0	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTAL		1	7,393	39	30	25	33	66	50	42	65	110	19	18	26	21	6	9	19

... No report received through the Measles Elimination Surveillance System

Table No. 3

Measles Surveillance Indicators for the period: 99/01 - 99/43

Region	Country	% Sites Reporting Weekly	% Cases Investigated ≤48 Hours	% Cases W/Complete Inves. Form	% Cases W/Adequate Sample	% Lab. Results ≤7 Days	
AND	BOL	...	99	81	88	56	
	COL	86	83	57	92	84	
	ECU	94	94	50	92	87	
	PER	100	98	59	100	94	
	VEN	88	91	84	98	87	
BRA CAP	BRA	44	68	16	63	0	
	COR	90	100	0	0	...	
	ELS	100	94	31	96	75	
	GUT	100	93	41	88	41	
	HON	99	99	97	99	75	
	NIC	99	97	78	99	91	
	PAN	100	93	6	85	74	
	CAR	98	96	51	82	100	
	LAC	98	...	...	...	...
	DOR	100	97	48	97	21	
MEX NOA	FGU	...	...	...	...	...
	GUA	...	...	0	...	...
	HAI	94	100	0	...	...
	MAR	...	...	...	...	...
	PUR	...	...	...	...	...
	MEX	94	93	80	93	42	
	CAN	...	...	...	...	...
	USA	...	...	...	...	...
	SOC	ARG	58	...	3	92	93
		CHI	100	97	60	91	83
PAR		99	98	18	94	21	
URU		...	100	44	100	100	
TOTAL		80	89	51	86	53	

... No report received