

Microbiology Collection and Handling

General Information

1. All specimens for culture, except stools, must be sent in proper sterile containers, which are properly labeled with the patient's full name, DOB and source of specimen, date and time of collection. Stool may be submitted in a clean non-sterile container.
2. Fill our requisition completely, including patient's full name, DOB, ordering physician, type of specimen (source), time collected and test ordered.
3. Send all specimens for any type of culture to the laboratory as soon as possible after collection. The time a specimen is collected for culture must be recorded on the requisition.
4. **Do not submit leaking specimens to the laboratory.** This is a health hazard for those handling the specimen. (All specimens are to be placed in transport bags).
5. Urine specimens for culture should be refrigerated if not brought to laboratory within one hour, unless transferred into gray top culture tube.
6. Stools for Clostridium Difficile should be received in the laboratory as soon as possible or within 24 hours of collection.
7. Stool for Occult Blood – Pick up cards and dietary instructions from the laboratory.
8. Swab specimens for Neisseria gonorrhoea must be brought to the lab immediately.
9. Cultures for anaerobic organisms should be sent in an anaerobic culture swab and transported to the lab as soon as possible.
10. The process of generating a quality bacteriology test result begins with the proper collection and transport of the specimen.
11. Specimens should be collected with as little external contamination as possible. Whenever possible specimens should be obtained before antibiotics administered.
12. Wound and body fluid specimens should be submitted within one hour after collection.
13. If a specimen is submitted in a syringe the needle **must** be removed before transportation to the laboratory.

