

SUBMITTING AND TRANSPORTING SPECIMENS

SUBMITTING SPECIMENS

Transport laboratory specimens in leak-proof sealed plastic bags specifically designed for specimen transport. Place request form in the outside pocket of the specimen transport bag. (Use one bag per patient.)

SUPPLIES

Mailing cartons, labels, coolant packs, plastic bags, containers for urine and stool specimens, and request forms are provided upon request at no additional charge.

Special specimen transport containers (infectious mailers) are **not** provided or provided at additional charge.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

Testing accuracy is dependent upon collection technique and specimen preparation.

SPECIMEN PROCESSING:

- Serum: Allow blood to clot at room temperature, centrifuge, and separate serum within one hour. Transfer aliquot to a plastic vial unless otherwise specified.
- Plasma: Centrifuge and separate plasma as soon as possible. Transfer aliquot to a plastic vial and indicate anticoagulant used on the label.
- Coagulation specimens are collected in 3.2% buffered citrate (light blue top) tubes. Allow tubes to fill completely to yield the proper concentration of anticoagulant to blood. Contact Customer Service for special processing and transport instructions on specimens that will not arrive within 24 hours of specimen collection.
- Whole Blood: Gently mix blood before transferring to a plastic vial. Indicate the anticoagulant used on the label.
- Multiple Tests: If two or more tests requiring different types of specimens are requested on one patient, indicate the type of specimen and anticoagulant on each vial.
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URINE, TIMED COLLECTION

Measure and record the collection volume in the space provided on the test request form. The total collection should be well mixed prior to aliquotting. Submit only the required aliquot. Refer to the specimen requirements to determine whether any pH adjustment or preservatives are necessary.

SPECIMEN PACKAGING

Use plastic specimen containers for specimen transport. If sending glass specimen collection tubes, package to prevent breakage and leakage. Place specimens surrounded by absorbent material in a plastic leakproof biohazard bag. Place the specimen bag(s) and request form(s) in a styrofoam container. Please do not staple bags.

SPECIMEN TRANSPORT

Transport laboratory specimens in accordance to International Air Transport Association (IATA) regulations. Infectious substance mailers are **not** provided without charge. Make sure all covers and containers are tightly closed and the transport bags are sealed shut to prevent sample leakage and loss.

- Room Temperature Specimens: Specimens should be packaged in such a manner to protect from temperature extremes.
- Ambient Specimens: Use the small prepaid mailing containers provided to transport routine serum and urine specimens which do not require special temperature conditions or handling requirements.
- Frozen Specimens: Place specimen in a plastic vial with 5 lbs of dry ice; place in styrofoam mailing container. Put the request form(s) and the specimen(s) in separate plastic bags. Do not send frozen specimens in glass containers unless required for testing. Do not fill specimen vial more than three-fourths full before freezing. Label outside of container "Dry ice--freeze". Mail or send via courier.
- Refrigerated Specimens: Place specimen container on a coolant pack and fill the vacant space with any type of packaging material; place in a styrofoam mailing container. Put the request form(s) and the specimen(s) in separate plastic bags. Mark the outside of the container "Refrigerated specimen". Mail or send via courier.
- Infectious Material: Packaging must comply with IATA standards. Known infectious substances for air transport must be packaged in specialized mailers. An "Etiologic Agent" label must be attached to the outer shipping container prior to transportation. Refer to IATA regulations for further explanation.

COURIER SERVICE

Courier service is available only to Twin Cities metropolitan customers within our defined courier service area. For assistance in arranging other courier services, please contact the Customer Service 612-273-7838.

POSTAGE

The referring facility will be required to pay postage on packages.