

GENERAL TEST ORDERING AND SPECIMEN COLLECTION INFORMATION – CLINICAL SPECIMENS

1. CLINICAL SPECIMENS:

a. Requisitions:

Provide the following information:

- Complete name of patient including first and last name
- Personal Health Number (PHN) including province name. If PHN is not available, provide RCMP, Military, Hospital, Medical Record or Clinic Number.
- Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)
- Gender
- Patient's home address and phone number
- Complete name and address of ordering physician/health care provider
- Report destination (please use location code if known)
- Specimen type and anatomical source
- Date and time of collection ▪ Specific test(s) requested
- Diagnosis or clinical information:
 - Antimicrobial therapy
 - Dates of onset of illness and therapy
 - Clinical diagnosis
 - Recent immunization history if relevant
 - Risk factors for disease e.g. HCV, HIV
 - Specification of "source" versus "recipient" for occupational exposure
 - Travel history including visits to tropical countries or endemic areas
- Third party billing (non-public health, insurance, occupational, VISA, etc. requirements)
- If carbon copy of report is requested, provide the receiver's first and last name and complete address
- If fax report is requested, provide the receiver's first and last name and the fax number with area code

If information on the requisition is incomplete, a delay in testing and/or reporting may occur.

CON'T...

b. STAT Requests:

A clearly indicated STAT request **must** be submitted with complete patient, specimen and test request information on the requisition.

Include name and telephone number of the person to contact with results.

Phone the Laboratory (Calgary 403-944-1200 or Edmonton 780-407-7121) to notify staff of the STAT request, and provide the following information:

- Name of submitting facility
- Name of patient
- Tests requested – type of specimen
- Method of delivery and expected time of arrival
- Name and phone number of contact person (for tracking specimen if necessary and phoning results).

The specimen must be properly packaged for transport and must be “flagged” as STAT so it will be obvious to the receiver (use red ribbon or tape).

Transport STAT specimens IMMEDIATELY to the Laboratory.

c. Specimen Collection, Labelling, and Submission:

For test specific collection requirements, refer to the:

[Search page for ProvLab Guide to Services](#)

Accurate and complete specimen labelling is a laboratory requirement. All specimens must be labelled with:

- Complete name of patient including first and last name
- Personal Health Number (PHN) – if PHN is not available, provide RCMP, Military, Hospital, Medical Record or Clinic Number.
- Specimen type and anatomical source
- Time and date of collection

Unlabeled or unmatched specimens will not be processed.

Prompt delivery of specimens is necessary to ensure minimum delay in processing.

For packaging and transport information, refer to:

[Transport of Diagnostic Specimens and Infectious Substances](#) and
[Transportation of Category A or Category B Infectious Substances](#) . **CON'T...**

d. Specimen Rejection

Rejection criteria are designed to ensure the provision of valid and timely laboratory results in the delivery of quality patient care. Specimens and requisitions should be labelled in accordance with the Alberta Health Service Specimen Acceptance Policy. For more information about the policy as well as test request (requisition) requirements, please see Alberta Health Services Laboratory Bulletin, August 22, 2011 '[Reminder: Laboratory Policy – Acceptance of Laboratory Samples and Test Requests](#)' .

Specimens may be rejected for the following reasons:

- Specimens lacking two unique identifiers
- Improperly labelled specimen
- Unlabelled specimen
- Incomplete information on the requisition ▪ Sub-optimal specimen, i.e.:
 - Leaking - Inappropriate collection device
 - Inappropriate specimen container - Inappropriate transport medium
 - Insufficient quantity of specimen

- Duplicate microbiology samples received on the same day, i.e. multiple stool, sputum specimens
- Integrity of sample compromised by effects of uncontrolled transport temperatures, i.e. freezing, heating
- Specimen delayed in transit
- Test no longer available/performed by the Laboratory
- Specimen submitted is inappropriate for test requested.
- No specimen source indicated