




Sputum Collection Instructions

Sputum is mucus or phlegm coughed up from your lungs (not spit, saliva, or nasopharyngeal discharge). Sputum samples are used to diagnose active tuberculosis (TB) and to monitor the effectiveness of TB treatment.

<p>Step 1</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink plenty of water the night before collection. Best time of day to collect sputum is when you first wake.• Do not eat, drink or smoke before coughing up sputum from the lungs.• Rinse (do not swallow) the mouth with water before sputum is collected to minimize residual food particles, mouthwash, or oral drugs that might contaminate the specimen.
<p>Step 2</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go away from other people either outside or beside an open window before collecting the specimen. This helps protect other people from TB germs when you cough.• Take the plastic tube with you. The collection tube is very clean. Do not open it until you are ready to use it. Carefully open the plastic tube.
<p>Step 3</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take several deep breaths.• Cough hard from deep inside the chest three times to bring sputum up from your lungs.• Spit the sputum into the tube carefully. Try not to touch the rim of the container.• Repeat until you have 1 – 2 tablespoons of sputum in the tube.• Replace the cap tightly on the plastic tube.• Wash and dry the outside of the tube.• Write date of collection in the proper box on the lab slip.

Step 4



- Place the primary specimen container (usually a conical centrifuge tube) in the clear plastic baggie that has the biohazard symbol imprint.
- Place the white absorbent sheet in the plastic baggie.
- Expel or “push” excess air from the plastic baggie and then seal it. Refer to the printed instructions on the baggie for detailed guidance on sealing the baggie properly.
- Place the plastic baggie inside the white Tyvek envelope.
- Expel or “push” excess air from the Tyvek envelope and then seal the Tyvek envelope securely.
- Place the Tyvek envelope inside the fiberboard canister.
- Place the specimen submission form inside the fiberboard canister.
- Screw the canister lid onto the canister. Secure the lid closed with sealing/mailling tape.

Step 5



- Immediately ship the specimen via US Post Office.
- Call the county TB clinic and report that you have collected and mailed the specimen.

- Contact Name _____
- Phone Number _____