

2019 Collection and Transport Guidelines for Microbiology Specimens

ANALYSIS	SPECIMEN COLLECTION	STORAGE TEMP	RECOMMENDED TRANSPORT TIME
ROUTINE CULTURE			
SWABS Throat Eye* Ear Nasal Superficial Wound Deep Wound Other Anaerobes**	Copan Swab: Amies Clear Gel (red top) *Eye swabs to be taken prior to the application of topical anesthetic **Starplex Anaerobic System: Clear Gel (black top) swabs Available from Valley Medical Laboratories on request	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs
Sputum	Sterile Container (pink top)	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 12 hrs
VAGINITIS			
Initial Chronic/recurrent	Copan Swab: Amies Clear Gel (red top)	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs
GONORRHEA CULTURE			
Cervix Urethra Throat Rectal Other	Copan Swab: Amies Clear Gel (red top) Rectal samples require a culture swab for Gonorrhea and an Aptima Multitest swab for Chlamydia/Gonorrhea NAAT.	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs
GROUP B STREP SCREEN			
Vagino-anorectal swab	Copan Swab: Amies Clear Gel (red top)	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs

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NAAT CHLAMYDIA (CT) & GONORRHEA (GC) & TRICHOMONAS (TV)			
Vaginal Swab	Aptima Multitest Swab Kit (orange label)	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Cervix Swab	Aptima Unisex Swab Kit (white label)	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Female Urine	Aptima Urine Sample Kit (yellow label) Transfer urine from first void urine collection within 24 hours	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
NAAT CHLAMYDIA (CT) & GONORRHEA (GC)			
Male Urethral Swab	Aptima Unisex Swab Kit (white label)	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Male Urine	Aptima Urine Sample Kit (yellow label) Transfer urine from first void urine collection within 24 hours	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Throat Swab	Aptima Multitest Swab Kit (orange label)	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Rectal Swab	Aptima Multitest Swab Kit (orange label) Rectal samples also require a culture swab for Gonorrhea	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
Eye Swab	Aptima Multitest Swab Kit (orange label)	RT / 4°C	< 7 days
ENTERIC / STOOL SPECIMENS			
C. difficile Testing	Sterile Container (pink top) –unpreserved stool sample (refrigerate ASAP)	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 24 hrs
Stool Culture	Container With Enteric Pathogen Transport Preservative (EPT) (transfer stool sample to EPT asap - within 2hrs of collection)	RT / 4°C	< 48 hrs
	Sterile Container (pink top) – unpreserved stool sample (Shigella sp. are labile in unpreserved samples > 2hrs)	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 12 hrs
Ova & Parasite Exam	Container With SAF Fixative (transfer stool sample to SAF within 30 min of collection)	RT / 4°C	< 48 hrs
	Sterile Container (pink top) – unpreserved stool sample	RT / 4°C	30 min
Pinworm Swab	Valley Medical Laboratories Vaseline/Paraffin Swab Collection Kit	RT / 4°C	< 48 hrs
Worm Identification	Sterile Container (pink top) – unpreserved worm or worm segments	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs
Fecal Fat	Sterile Container (pink top) – unpreserved stool sample	RT / 4°C	< 24 hrs

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URINE TESTS			
Urine Culture	Sterile Container with Boric Acid (white top) – Preserved Urine	RT / 4°C	< 12 hrs
	Sterile Container (pink top) – Unpreserved Urine	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 12 hrs
Urinalysis	Sterile Container (pink top) – Unpreserved Urine	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 24 hrs
Pregnancy Test	Sterile Container (pink top) – Unpreserved Urine (first morning sample)	RT	< 8 hrs
		4°C	< 24 hrs
Schistosoma hematobium	Sterile Container (pink top) – Unpreserved Urine Refer to collection Instructions	RT	< 2 hrs
		4°C	< 24 hrs
SEMEN ANALYSIS			
Post-Vasectomy	Sterile Container (pink top) Refer to Semen Specimens Patient Instructions	RT	< 60 min
Fertility	Sterile Container (pink top) Refer to Semen Specimens Patient Instructions	RT	< 60 min
FLUIDS			
All	Not processed at VML - Deliver directly to local hospital Refer to hospital specimen collection and handling protocol	N/A	N/A
MYCOLOGY			
Dermatophytes: Skin scrapings, Hair, Nail Clippings	Sent to LifeLabs Collection Kit supplied by Valley Medical Laboratories	RT	< 24 hrs
ECTOPARASITES			
Ticks and Scabies	Sterile Container (pink top) Sent to BCCDC	RT	< 24 hrs