








Microbiology Specimen Collection Guide

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Culture Type	Container	Collection (Specimen Source Required on all tests)	Storage & Transport Temperature	Comments
Acid Fast Culture (Mycobacteria)	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Sputum: >5 mL required. First morning specimen preferred.</p> <p>For blood, sodium heparin tube preferred. Lithium heparin acceptable. Do not centrifuge.</p>	<p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Keep specimen at room temperature if other cultures are needed on same specimen</p>	<p>Swabs are not appropriate specimens for AFB culture.</p>
Aerobic Culture (Routine Bacterial Culture)	<p style="text-align: center;">BBL CultureSwab Collection and Transport System - - not acceptable for anaerobic cultures</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Used for bacterial cultures.</p> <p>The following sources are accepted, but not limited to:</p> <p>Abscesses/Wound Arm Ear Eye Foot Surgical Specimens Throat Vaginal</p>	<p>Transport to lab ASAP.</p> <p>Room Temperature.</p>	<p>Tissue and fluid specimens preferred when possible.</p> <p>Material selected for culture must be from the actual site of infection, collected with a minimum of contamination from adjacent tissues, organs, or secretions.</p>



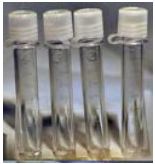
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Anaerobic Culture	<p>BBL Vacutainer Anaerobic Specimen Collector</p>  <p>Sterile Container</p> 	<p>The following sources are accepted, but not limited to:</p> <p>Abscesses Fluids Surgical Specimens Wound</p>	<p>Storage:</p> <p>12 hours at Room Temperature.</p> <p>12-48 hours at 2-8°C.</p> <p>Stability: 24-48 hours.</p>	<p>Tissue and Fluid is preferred over swab specimens to enhance the recovery of anaerobes.</p> <p>Anaerobic cultures are <u>not</u> performed on: catheter tips, mouth, vaginal, urine, sputum or CSF.</p>
Blood Culture Or Blood Culture, Fungus	<p>1 SET of Blood Culture Bottles</p> 	<p>See Blood Culture collection procedure.</p> <p>Two (2) collections are a typical order in a 24 hour period.</p>	<p>Room Temperature.</p> <p>Stability: 24 hours at Room Temperature.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p>	<p>Send to Microbiology as soon as possible after collection.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p>
Blood Culture Pediatric Patient	<p>1 Pediatric Blood Culture Bottle</p> 	<p>See Blood Culture collection procedure.</p> <p>Two (2) collections are a typical order in a 24 hour period</p>	<p>Room Temperature.</p> <p>Stability: 24 hours at Room Temperature.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p>	<p>Send to Microbiology as soon as possible after collection.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p>





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BAL or Bronchial Washing	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	If Pneumocystis suspected, please write "pneumocyst" on specimen label and on paper requisition or comment in electronic order.	<p>Deliver to Lab ASAP. Do NOT send through the pneumatic tube system.</p> <p>Room Temperature.</p> <p>Stability: 12 hours.</p>	<p>Please write "Pneumocystis suspected" on specimen or on order.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p>
<p>Clostridioides (Clostridium) difficile toxin</p> <p>(C. Diff)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	Stool collected in sterile container and sent to lab ASAP.	<p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: < 24 hours refrigerated. >72 hours frozen.</p>	<p>Formed stools are not acceptable.</p> <p>Bristol Stool Chart will be utilized to determine acceptability.</p>
<p>Cerebral Spinal Fluid Culture</p> <p>Enterovirus (CSF Only)</p> <p>Meningitis Panel (Film Array)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CSF Collection Kit</p> 	<p>Collect CSF in collection kit and transport to laboratory immediately.</p> <p>Tubes are pre-labeled 1 - 4. Always collect tubes in order.</p>	<p>Deliver to Lab IMMEDIATELY.</p> <p>Do NOT send through the pneumatic tube system.</p> <p>Room Temperature.</p>	<p>Send to microbiology as soon as possible.</p> <p>Do not refrigerate.</p> <p>Enterovirus and Meningitis Panel are entered into Powerchart as separate orders.</p>




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Chlamydia, Trichomonas and/or GC DNA probe	<p>Aptima Specimen Collection Kit: Cervical/Urethral Swab.</p>  <p>Urine in Sterile Container or Aptima Urine Specimen Collection Kit.</p>   <p>Thin Prep Pap Specimen in Aptima Specimen Transport Tube.</p> 	<p>Collection:</p> <p>Cervical/Urethral: Use swabs provided with kit. Use white swab for cleaning and discard. Collect sample with blue swab and break off swab in tube.</p> <p>Urine: Patient should not have urinated for at least one hour before collection. Do not cleanse prior to collection. Collect first 20 – 30 mL of urine stream.</p> <p>Thin Prep: Patient is swabbed for Pap Smear with Thin Prep Pap Test collection kit. Use 1 mL pipette to transfer fluid to Aptima tube.</p>	<p>Transport to lab ASAP. Room Temperature.</p>	<p>Repeat testing for cure is not recommended.</p>



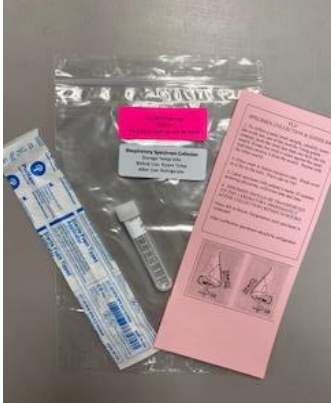
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Fungal Culture or Fungal Smear	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container for most specimens.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Swab acceptable for throat and vaginal specimens.</p> 	Send Specimen in sterile container.	<p style="text-align: center;">Room Temperature.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stability: 24 hours.</p>	Fungal smear is ordered on BAL specimens for Pneumocystis. Please note on specimen or requisition when Pneumocystis is suspected.
Group B Strep Culture	<p style="text-align: center;">BBL CultureSwab or Lim Broth (both shown)</p> 	Per CDC recommendations, prenatal screening for vaginal and rectal Group B Streptococcal colonization should be done on all pregnant women at 35 – 37 weeks' gestation.	<p style="text-align: center;">Room Temperature.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stability: 24 hours at room temperature. 6 days at 2 - 8°C Lim Broth: 24 hours Room Temperature.</p>	If susceptibility testing is indicated for penicillin allergic women notify the laboratory at (231) 935-6123.






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<p>Herpes, VZ and non-respiratory Cultures</p>	<p>M4 or M5 Transport Media for the transport of viruses, chlamydia, mycoplasma, and ureaplasma.</p> 	<p>Collect specimen using supplied swab.</p> <p>Swabs with wood handle are not acceptable. (Wood is toxic to viruses and results may be invalid.)</p>	<p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: 24 hours.</p>	<p>CSF Specimens: Use CSF collection Kit. Testing is performed at Mayo Medical Laboratories.</p>
<p>Herpes simplex (HSV) by Molecular Detection, PCR</p>	<p>M4 or M5 Transport Media for the transport of viruses, chlamydia, mycoplasma, and ureaplasma.</p> 	<p>Dermal, eye, throat, or genital sources: collect specimen using swab provided. Swabs with wood handle are not acceptable. (Wood is toxic to viruses and results may be invalid.)</p> <p>Body fluids: place sample in sterile container</p>	<p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: 5 days refrigerated. -70°C > 5 days.</p>	<p>HSV 1 & 2 by PCR can be performed on one specimen.</p>
<p>Influenza A/B Testing</p>	<p>Influenza A/B Collection kit</p> 	<p>Collect nasal swab using swab provided. Place swab in saline. Break swab off to fit in the vial with the cap on. Replace cap tightly on transport system.</p>	<p>Transfer to lab ASAP.</p> <p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: 4 days</p>	<p>For Influenza only.</p>




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Legionella Urine Antigen	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	Submit at least 1ml of urine in sterile cup.	Stability: 24 hours at Room Temperature. 14 days at 2-8°C. 30 days at <20°C.	
Mycoplasma PCR Ureaplasma PCR Varicella Zoster PCR	<p style="text-align: center;">M4 or M5 Transport Media</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Puritan UniTranz-RT</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">BBL CultureSwab</p> 	Place swab or tissue in transport media if applicable.	Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP.	Testing performed at Mayo Medical Laboratories




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Occult Blood	<p>Sterile Container</p> 	Submit at least 5ml of stool in sterile container.	Stability: 14 days at Room Temperature.	Do not refrigerate.
Ova and Parasite Screen	<p>Stool Collection Kit or Sterile Container</p> 	Submit 5 mL of stool in sterile container or 5mL stool in PVA (red cap) and in Formalin preservative (pink cap) vials from Stool Collection kit.	Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Preserved specimens stable until date on container.	Initial stool screen is performed for Cryptosporidium and Giardia. To obtain full ova and parasite exam, call microbiology at (231) 935-6123 to request.
Pertussis (Bordetella pertussis) Whooping Cough	<p>Bordetella pertussis (Whooping cough) Collection Kit</p> 	Collect nasopharyngeal (NP) swab using blue topped swab. Place the swab into the transport media with charcoal. Discard the empty tube	Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 36 hours.	Two types of tests can be performed: B. pertussis Culture. Results available in 10 days -or- B. pertussis PCR. Results available in 2-3 days. Sent to Mayo Medical Lab.




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Pinworm Prep	<p style="text-align: center;">Pinworm Collection Paddle</p> 	<p>Collect by pressing sticky side of paddle to perianal area. Collect at night or early morning, prior to bathing or using the toilet.</p>	<p>Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 4 days.</p>	<p>Tape prep acceptable, but not preferred. If performing tape prep, ensure the tape is clear tape.</p>
Pneumocystis Stain	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	<p>BAL specimen preferred. Write "Pneumocystis" on specimen. This is a special request.</p>	<p>Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: <8 hours.</p>	<p>Order Fungal Stain and write "Look for pneumocystis" on requisition or comment in electronic order.</p>
RSV Testing	<p style="text-align: center;">RSV Collection kit</p> 	<p>Collect nasopharyngeal (NP) using swab provided. Place swab in Saline Transport Tube. Break swab off at red score line on shaft, or cut metal wire. Replace cap tightly on transport system.</p>	<p>Transfer to lab ASAP. Refrigerate. Stability: 4 days</p>	<p>Influenza can also be ran on this specimen.</p>




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Respiratory Panel PCR Film Array	RSV / Influenza A/B Collection Kit 	Nasopharyngeal aspirate/swab/wash.	Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 4 hours at Room Temperature. 3 days at 2-8°C. 30 days at -20°C.	Adenovirus, Coronavirus, Human Metapneumo, Flu A/B, Parafu 1,2,3, Rhino/Entero, and RSV.
Rotavirus Screen	Sterile Container 	Stool collected in sterile container.	Refrigerate. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 48 hours at 2°-8°C. 10 months at -20°C.	
SA/MRSA PCR	BBL CultureSwab Collection and Transport system 	Insert swabs 1-2 cm into each nostril. Rotate the swabs against the inside of the nostril for 3 seconds. Apply slight pressure with a finger on the outside of the nose to help assure good contact between the swab and inside of the nose. Repeat for the 2 nd nostril using same swab. Remove cap from plastic transport tube and place swabs into tube.	Room Temperature. Stability: 24 hours	MRSA PCR test results on inpatients are available within 3 hours. SA PCR tests are for presurgical screens on nares specimens only.





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Sputum Culture	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Instruct patients to produce a deep cough specimen, attempting to minimize contamination with saliva. (1st morning collection is usually most productive.)</p>	<p>Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 12 hours.</p>	<p>All sputum specimens are screened microscopically for acceptability.</p>
Stool Culture	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container or Stool Collection Kit</p> 	<p>Submit 5 mL of stool in sterile container or in Cary-Blair preservative vial from Stool Collection kit.</p>	<p>Refrigerate. Unpreserved samples are stable for 2 hours. Samples in stool culture transport media are stable for 4 days. Transport to Lab ASAP.</p>	<p>Stool culture pathogens include: <i>Salmonella</i>, <i>Shigella</i>, <i>Shiga toxin 1 and 2 producing E. coli (E. coli o157)</i>, <i>Campylobacter</i>, <i>Vibrio</i>, <i>Aeromonas</i>, and <i>Plesiomonas</i>. Requests for <i>Yersinia</i> are a separate order in Powerchart</p>
Strep pneumo Urine Antigen	<p style="text-align: center;">Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Submit at least 1ml of urine in sterile cup.</p>	<p>Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 24 hours at Room Temperature. 14 days at 2-8°C. 30 days at -20°C.</p>	





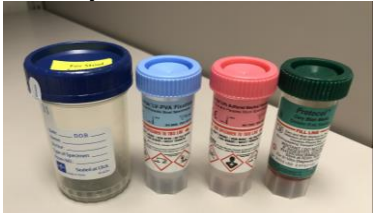
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Throat Culture (Group A Strep Culture with or without Strep Screen)	BBL CultureSwab Collection and Transport System 	Fresh swab of each tonsillar fossa, and the posterior pharynx, including any visible exudate from these areas. The swab should be obtained with some form of tongue depression to avoid lingual contamination.	Room Temperature. Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 72 hours.	A well-collected specimen may elicit a gag reflex and be unpleasant to the patient.
Urine Culture	Sterile Container  BD Vacutainer Urine Tube 	Submit > 5 mL from a midstream, "clean-catch," random urine collection.	Transport to Lab ASAP. Stability: 24 hours at 2-8°C. 2 hours at Room Temperature.	
Vaginal Wet Prep	Diamonds Media 	Vaginal Collection.	Transport to Lab ASAP. Room Temperature. Stability: 12 hours.	Tests for: Yeast, Clue Cell (Bacterial Vaginosis), and Trichomonas vaginalis.

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<p>Viral Culture – Virus name must be noted on specimen.</p>	<p>M4 or M5 Transport Media</p>  <p>Puritan UniTranz-RT</p>  <p>Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Collect specimen using supplied swab.</p> <p>Swabs with wood handle are not acceptable. Wood is toxic to viruses and results may be invalid.</p>	<p>Transport to Lab ASAP.</p> <p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: 48 hours</p>	<p>Specimens submitted for “viral culture” are not appropriate from most sources. The suspected agent (virus name) must be included in the request.</p> <p>Some test requests will be changed to appropriate PCR testing.</p>
<p>Fecal Leukocytes (WBCs)</p>	<p>Sterile Container</p> 	<p>Stool collected in sterile container.</p>	<p>Transport to Lab ASAP.</p> <p>Refrigerate.</p> <p>Stability: 2 weeks at 2 -30°C.</p>	
<p>Yersinia Culture</p>	<p>Cary Blair from Stool Kit</p> 	<p>Submit 5 mL of stool in sterile container or in Cary-Blair preservative vial from Stool Collection kit.</p>	<p>Transport to Lab ASAP.</p> <p>Room Temperature.</p> <p>Stability: Unpreserved stool: 1 hour. Cary Blair: 4 days.</p>	<p>Not included in Stool Culture.</p> <p>Order separately.</p>