



Danbury Hospital
Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
Technically Speaking

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**DANBURY HOSPITAL LABORATORY AWARDED CAP ACCREDITATION
WITH COMMENDATION!!**

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Microbiology Specimen Collection Requirements

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An inappropriately collected/transported specimen is the most common reason for the inability of the staff of the Microbiology section of the laboratory to perform testing. In an ongoing effort to assure the quality of the specimens received in the section, the following reminders for collection and transport of specimens for testing are presented:

Stool Samples

Specimens should be submitted to the laboratory within 2 hours of collection in a clean, dry container. If this is not possible, the use of collection systems that include preservatives is recommended as follows:

Bacterial cultures: Specimens may be collected in Cary-Blair Parapaks, required for stool culture, and should be submitted within 72 hours. Specimens may be refrigerated for up to 24 hours.

Ova and Parasite: Submit PVA/Formalin Parapaks within 72 hours or refrigerate up to 24 hours. NOTE: if ova and parasite (x3) is ordered, a stool sample should be submitted on three (3) consecutive days, preferably in Parapaks, and the dates should be clearly indicated on the specimen containers. Aspirates must be transported in 2 hours.

Stool leukocytes, C.difficile, viral culture or rotavirus: submit the specimen in a clean, dry container within 2 hours or refrigerate for up to 24 hours. If the order is for C.difficile only, the specimen may be refrigerated for up to 72 hours.

GC/Chlamydia DNA Probe Analysis

The Gen-Probe DNA probe system is approved only for the following sources:
Chlamydia: urethral (male), cervix (female) and conjunctiva
GC (*Neisseria gonorrhoeae*): urethral (male) and cervix (female)

It is imperative that the source of the specimen be indicated on the requisition or computer label! The *female collection kit (pink)* has two swabs. One swab is used to remove mucus from the cervical opening and it then discarded. The second swab is used to collect the sample from the cervix and put into the transport tube. The swab should be broken off in the tube and the tube is capped tightly. Only the second swab should be put

into the transport tube. Putting both swabs into the transport tube absorbs the fluid and may make analysis impossible. The *male collection kit (blue)* must be used to collect male urethral cultures and eye cultures. Transport of specimens may be at room temperature (RT) or refrigerated.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

Collection of specimens for RSV should be performed in the physician's office. Using a minitip culturette, a true nasopharyngeal sample must be collected. The swab may be refrigerated until transported to the laboratory. If the patient must be seen at the hospital for additional testing, the staff of the Microbiology section of the laboratory will collect the sample in the Test Center.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

All physicians suspecting pertussis as a diagnosis should send the patient to the Danbury Hospital Laboratory's Testing Center. Appointments are not necessary. **NO PERTUSSIS SPECIMENS** should be collected in offices. All positive results for cultures or direct fluorescent antibody stains (DFA's) are called to the physician immediately.

Viral Cultures

For collection of all viral cultures, a green tipped culturette must be submitted. Once collected, swabs should be refrigerated until transported. Viral cultures will not be performed from routine culturettes since viral agent recovery is not optimal from this source.

Rapid Influenzae A and B

Routine culturettes from either the nose or throat may be submitted for rapid influenzae testing. Since it is recommended that negative rapid tests be confirmed by culture, a viral culturette from the same source should be submitted at the same time. If a nasopharyngeal specimen is submitted, a minitip culturette may be used. Again, submitting a viral culturette at the same time is strongly recommended.

Urine Cultures/Urinalysis

A clean catch urine should be submitted for culture and/or urinalysis. Please be sure that the lid is **SECURELY** closed. (A "click" will be heard as the lid is tightened.)

If a urinalysis is requested, the specimen should be submitted within 2 hours of collection. The specimen may be refrigerated for up to 8 hours if necessary.

If a urine culture is requested, the specimen should be submitted within 2 hours, or may be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Alternatively, a gray stoppered BD urine collection tube which contains a preservative may be submitted. This specimen may be kept at room temperature for up to 48 hours.

PLEASE NOTE: urine submitted in a BD tube cannot be used for urinalysis or have a gram stain performed.

To obtain specimen collection containers or if there are questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Microbiology section of the laboratory at 797-7305.