



NORTHERN ZONE PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE ABERDEEN REGIONAL HOSPITAL LABORATORY TEST CATALOGUE

Specimen and Requisition Requirements

All specimens received in the Laboratory must be clearly labeled with:

- the patient's first and last name,
- HCN
- Date of Birth
- Collector's initials
- Date of collection
- Time of Collection
- Specimens must be accompanied by a completed requisition, including patient's first and last name, Date of birth, Health card number as well as physician name, clinical notes, the collection date, collection time and collector's name, as well as the Patient Information Form. (NNZ-F-LS-0023).

Ensure that specimens are not leaking and are delivered to the Laboratory within **1.5 hours**. Some specimens specify quicker delivery time required. Please note the date and time of last dose if drug testing is requested.

Refer to pages 37 to 41 for the collection requirements for Transfusion Medicine specimens.

Tests Not in Catalogue

Please view Capital Health Test Catalogue on NSH Intranet for tests not performed at Aberdeen Regional Hospital. Contact Aberdeen Regional Hospital Lab at 902-752-7600 ext. 2890 for information on tests not found in this catalogue.

Information for sample type and collection instructions of microbiology specimens not found in this catalogue may be found in the provincial microbiology user's manual.

Collection, Handling and Transport Instructions

Specimens need to be properly collected, processed, packaged, and transported in accordance with laboratory policies and procedures, in a timely manner and under conditions that will not compromise either the integrity of the specimen or patient confidentiality. Transportation must be compliant with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Act. Please ensure no patient information is visible when packaging specimens to be transported to the laboratory.

It is essential that an adequate volume/ quantity of specimen be submitted for analysis. Minimum volume/ quantity information is provided in each catalogue listing whenever applicable.

Hemolyzed or lipemic specimens may alter certain test results and may be rejected.



**NORTHERN ZONE PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE
ABERDEEN REGIONAL HOSPITAL TEST CATALOGUE**

All blood and urine specimens being dropped off must follow the guidelines of the independent phlebotomist agreement (<http://www.nshealth.ca/about-us/doing-business-us/independent-phlebotomy>).

Microbiology tests performed at Aberdeen Regional Hospital can be found at the end of this manual starting at page: 42.

For Microbiology tests not found in this manual please view Provincial Microbiology User's Manual

PPHLN – M0008-02

24 Hour Urine Calcium

Mnemonic	U24CA
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container with 25mL 6N HCL additive
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Calcium Creatinine Plus Ratio

Mnemonic	U24CACREAT
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container with 25mL 6N HCL additive
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Urine Chloride

Mnemonic	U24CL
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Creatinine

Mnemonic	U24CREAT
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative recommended or 25mL 6N HCL additive is acceptable.
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Creatinine Clearance

Mnemonic	CRECL
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative recommended or 25mL 6N HCL additive is acceptable. Blood creatinine required within 24 hours before or 24 hours after the collection of the 24-hour urine sample. Patient height and weight required.
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Magnesium

Mnemonic	U24MG
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container with 25mL 6N HCL additive
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Urine Microalbumin

Mnemonic	U24MALB
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Urine Osmolality

Mnemonic	U24OSMO
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container-No preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine pH

Mnemonic	U24PH
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Potassium

Mnemonic	U24K
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Total Protein

Mnemonic	U24TP
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

24 Hour Urine Urea

Mnemonic	U24UREA
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Urine Uric Acid

Mnemonic	U24URIC
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container with 10ml of 5% NaOH additive
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

24 Hour Urine Sodium

Mnemonic	U24NA
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	24 Hour Urine Container – No Preservative
Special Instructions	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

Mnemonic	ACET
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 mL no additive (red),
For Lab Use Only	Must be spun within 2 hours; separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Activated Partial Thromboplastin Time

Mnemonic	PTT
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	2.7 mL 3.2% sodium citrate (light blue)
Special Instructions	Sample must be filled to line; inadequate volume will result in specimen rejection.
For Lab Use Only	Spin heparinized patients within one hour of collection and non-heparinized within 4 hours of collection

Albumin

Mnemonic	ALB
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Must be spun within 2 hours.

Albumin/Creatinine Ratio Urine

Mnemonic	U ACR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container >3 mL

Alcohol (Ethanol)

Mnemonic	ETOH
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 mL no additive (red)
For Lab Use Only	Cannot be added on if alcohol swab is used. Must be spun within 2 hours, separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Alkaline Phosphatase

Mnemonic	ALK
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin (light green)
Special Instructions	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Alanine Amino Transferase

Mnemonic	ALT
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Amylase

Mnemonic	AMY
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Anaplasma

Mnemonic	ANAPLASMA
Specimen	Serum or Plasma
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube and one lavender EDTA
Special Instructions	Onset of Symptoms required. Must be received at regional site within 4 hours of collection.
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Arterial Cord Blood Gas

Mnemonic	ACOBG
Specimen	Cord Blood
Collection Tube	Lithium Heparin syringe
Special Instructions	Transport at room temperature
Stability	Optimal analysis is within 30 minutes of collection, to a maximum of 60 minutes. Please use clot catcher when running

Arterial Blood Gas

Mnemonic	ABG
Specimen	Arterial sample
Collection Tube	Lithium Heparin syringe
Special Instructions	Transport at room temperature
Stability	Optimal analysis is within 30 minutes of collection, to a maximum of 60 minutes.

Aspartate Amino Transferase

Mnemonic	AST
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Babesia

Mnemonic	BABESIA
Specimen	Serum or Plasma
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube and one lavender EDTA
Special Instructions	Onset of Symptoms required. Must be received at regional site within 4 hours of collection
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Bilirubin, Direct

Mnemonic	BILD
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection
Stability	Protect from light

Bilirubin, Total

Mnemonic	BILT
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Protect from light
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Albumin

Mnemonic	BFALB
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – ALT

Mnemonic	BFALT
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Amylase

Mnemonic	BFAMY
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Cell Count/Differential

Mnemonic	BFCC
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid, Synovial fluid
Collection Tube	1 x 3 or 4ml EDTA (mauve)
Special Instructions	Deliver ASAP to the lab
For Lab use only:	Must be tested within 2 hours of collection to maintain cell integrity, if delayed keep at 2-8°C

Body Fluids – Cholesterol

Mnemonic	BFCHOL
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Creatinine

Mnemonic	BFCREAT
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Crystal

Mnemonic	BFCRYS
Specimen	Synovial fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container (no additive)
For lab use only	Do Not spin

Body Fluids – Glucose

Mnemonic	BFGLU
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – LDH

Mnemonic	BFLDH
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – pH

Mnemonic	BFPH
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid, Synovial fluid
Collection Tube	Lithium Heparin Syringe-transport on ice
For Lab Use Only	Optimal analysis is within 60 minutes of Collection, acceptable up to 4 hours refrigerated (4°C). Minimum volume 1.0ml sample. Use clot catcher when running.

Body Fluids – Potassium

Mnemonic	BFK
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Sodium

Mnemonic	BFNA
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Total Bilirubin

Mnemonic	BFBILT
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Total Protein

Mnemonic	BFTP
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Triglyceride

Mnemonic	BFTRIG
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Urea

Mnemonic	BFUREA
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Body Fluids – Uric Acid

Mnemonic	BFURIC
Specimen	Peritoneal fluid, Pericardial fluid, Pleural fluid
Collection Tube	4 mL lithium heparin (dark green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Brain Natriuretic Peptide

Mnemonic	PROBNP-NT
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection. Referred to Colchester

Ca125

Mnemonic	CA-125
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Must be spun within 2 hours, allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester.

Calcium, Total

Mnemonic	CA
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.

Calcium, Random (Urine)

Mnemonic	UCAR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
For lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Calcium Creatinine Ratio (Urine)

Mnemonic	UCA-CREAR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
For lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester. Creatinine must be site changed to Colchester

Capillary Blood Gas

Mnemonic	CBG
Specimen	Capillary x2
Collection Tube	Heparin coated capillary tube.
Special Instructions	Must be well mixed by flea and magnet. Transport at room temperature
Stability	Sample must be run within 15 minutes of collection. Cancel specimen if >15 mins old.

Carbamazepine (Tegritol)

Mnemonic	CARB
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 mL no additive (red) do not use gel separators
Special Instructions	Must be spun within 2 hours, date, and time of last dose required, Allow red top to clot for 1 hour; separate from cells within 2 hours of collection. Collect immediately prior to next dose.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Carcinoembryonic Antigen

Mnemonic	CEA
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging
For lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester.

Chloride, Random (Urine)

Mnemonic	UCLR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container

Complete Blood Count

Mnemonic	CBC
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4 ml EDTA (lavender) or 3ml EDTA (lavender)

Cholesterol Level

Mnemonic	CHOL Note: Order LIPID if TRIG, LDL, HDL are ordered as well
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Creatine Kinase

Mnemonic	CK
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

COVID

Mnemonic	COVID
Specimen	Nasopharyngeal Swab
Collection Tube	Viral Transport Media
Special Instructions	Mark clearly <u>and</u> call Lab if STAT testing is required.
Stability	Deliver to Lab ASAP

Cortisol – 30 Minutes

Mnemonic	CORT30MIN
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Sample drawn 30 minutes post dose.
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, Referred to Colchester

Cortisol – 60 minutes

Mnemonic	CORT60MIN
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Sample drawn 60 minutes post dose.
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, Referred to Colchester

Cortisol – AM

Mnemonic	CORTAM
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4 mL no additive (red)
Special Instructions	Collect sample between 0700-0900.
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red for 1 hour Referred to Colchester

Cortisol – PM

Mnemonic	CORTPM
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4 mL no additive (red)
Special Instructions	Collect sample between 1500-1700.
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red for 1 hour Referred to Colchester

Cortisol - DST

Mnemonic	CORTDST
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4 mL no additive (red)
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red for 1 hour Referred to Colchester

Cortisol - Random

Mnemonic	CORT
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4 mL no additive (red).
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red for 1 hour Referred to Colchester

Creatinine

Mnemonic	EGFR ordered on outpatients, CREAT ordered on inpatients.
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Creatinine (Urine)

Mnemonic	UCREATR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container

C-Reactive Protein

Mnemonic	HS-CRP
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

CSF Cerebrospinal Fluid – Total Protein

Mnemonic	CSFTP
Specimen	Cerebrospinal Fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile CSF Containers
Special Instructions	Tube #1 Note: Ordering Physician may specify different tube #s for testing.
Stability	Test within 30 minutes of collection

CSF Cerebrospinal Fluid – Glucose

Mnemonic	CSFGLU
Specimen	Cerebrospinal Fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile CSF Containers
Special Instructions	Tube #1 Note: Ordering Physician may specify different tube #s for testing.
Stability	Test within 30 minutes of collection

CSF Cerebrospinal Fluid – Cell Count

Mnemonic	CSFCC
Specimen	Cerebrospinal Fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile CSF Containers
Special Instructions	Tube #2 and #4 if it is a bleed. Tube #2 if it is an infection. Note: Ordering Physician may specify different tube #s for testing.
Stability	Tested within 30 minutes of collection.

D-Dimer Quantitative

Mnemonic	DDQUAN
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	2.7 ml 3.2% sodium citrate (blue)
Special Instructions	Tube needs to be filled to the line and tested or frozen within 6 hours of collection.

Digoxin

Mnemonic	DIG
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green)
Special Instructions	Indicate time of last dose. Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Dilantin (Phenytoin)

Mnemonic	PHNY
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 mL no additive (red). Do not use gel separators)
Special Instructions	Last dose needs to be noted in Meditech with date and time. Collect immediately prior to next dose; 1-4 hours post IV loading dose for peak level. Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Electrolytes (Sodium, Potassium & Chloride)

Mnemonic	LYTES
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 ml lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate

Mnemonic	ESR
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4 mL EDTA (lavender) (Minimum volume 2.5 ml)
For Lab Use Only	Test needs to be completed within 10 hours of collection.

Estradiol

Mnemonic	EST
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging
	Referred to Colchester

Ferritin

Mnemonic	FER
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Fetal Fibronectin

Mnemonic	FFIBR
Specimen	Cervicovaginal swab
Collection Tube	200 µL of sample required in 1 mL extraction buffer tube.
For Lab Use Only	Testing will be performed at Colchester East Hants Health Centre, send a STAT run to Colchester.

Fibrinogen Screen

Mnemonic	FIB
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	2.7 ml 3.2% sodium citrate (blue)
Special Instructions	Tube must be filled to the line.

Folate

Mnemonic	FOL
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Folate is light sensitive, limit specimen exposure to light prior to testing, allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging. Must have "Do Not Cancel" or "hem" on req.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Free T3

Mnemonic	FT3
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, Referred to Colchester

Free T4

Mnemonic	FT4
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Follicle-Stimulating Hormone

Mnemonic	FSH
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, referred to Colchester

Gamma-Glutamyl Transferase

Mnemonic	GGT
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Gentamicin Post

Mnemonic	GENTPOST
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 ml no additive (red)
Special Instructions	Collect sample 30 minutes after dosage, Thixotropic gels may impact patient results. Separate cells within 2 hours of collection

Gentamicin Pre

Mnemonic	GENTPRE
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 ml no additive (red)
Special Instructions	Collect sample 30 minutes pre dosage, Thixotropic gels may impact patient results. Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Gentamicin Random

Mnemonic	GENTR
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 ml no additive (red)
Special Instructions	Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Glucose AC

Mnemonic	GLUAC
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Fasting 8 hours
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Glucose Loading Dose (50gm Oral Drink)- Gestational

Mnemonic	GTTLLOAD
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Collect a blood sample one hour after the 50-gram glucose drink is finished. No fasting required.
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Glucose Random

Mnemonic	GLUR
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube for Lab Use Only	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green) Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Glucose Tolerance Test (75gm Oral Dose)

Mnemonic	GTT
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Collect a fasting glucose AC prior to administrating the drink. Collect a blood sample two hours after the 75-gram glucose drink is finished. 8 hr fasting required.
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

Glucose Tolerance Test (75gm Oral Drink) – Gestational

Mnemonic	GTG
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin (light green)
Special Instructions	Collect a fasting glucose AC prior to administrating the drink. Collect blood samples one hour and two hours after the 75-gram glucose drink is finished. 8 hours fast required.
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

HCG Qualitative

Mnemonic	HCG
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	First morning specimen is preferred.

HCG Quantitative

Mnemonic	HCGSQ
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

HDL Cholesterol

Mnemonic	HDL
	Order LIPID if LDL, CHOL, and TRIG ordered as well.
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
For Lab Use Only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection

H.Pylori Antigen

Mnemonic	STHPAG
Specimen	Stool
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	If sent from another site keep frozen
For Lab Use Only	Testing performed at Colchester East Hants Health Centre.

Hemoglobin A1C

Mnemonic	A1C
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4 ml lavender (EDTA)
Special Instructions	Referred to Colchester

Hepatitis B Surface Antibody

Mnemonic	HEPBSAB
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging Test samples ASAP after collecting

Hepatitis B Surface Antigen

Mnemonic	HEPBSAG
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging Test samples ASAP after collecting

Hepatitis C Antibody

Mnemonic	HEPC
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging Test samples ASAP after collecting

HIV AG/AB Combo

Mnemonic	HIVAGAB
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging Test samples ASAP after collecting

Immunoglobulin A

Mnemonic	IGA
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4.0mL red topped tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red 1 hour

Immunoglobulin G

Mnemonic	IGG
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4.0mL red topped tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red 1 hour

Immunoglobulin M

Mnemonic	IGM
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4.0mL red topped tube
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red 1 hour

Ionized Calcium

Mnemonic	CAION
Specimen	Plasma-PST
Collection Tube	3 mL Lithium Heparin plasma separator tube. (Light green tube)
Special Instructions	Place on ice immediately after collection. Must be centrifuged within 2 hours of collection.
For lab use only	After centrifugation samples should remain capped and kept cold prior to analysis

Iron

Mnemonic	IRON
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, serum should be removed from the cells within 2 hours.

Lactate

Mnemonic	Order Venous Blood Gas
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Lactate Dehydrogenase

Mnemonic	LDH
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Separated from cells ASAP. Must have clinical note to be tested.

LDL Cholesterol, calculated

Mnemonic	LDL
	Order LIPID if HDL, CHOL, and TRIG ordered as well.
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Should be spun within 2 hours of collection.

Lipase

Mnemonic	LIP
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Should be separated from cells ASAP, maximum 2 hours.

Lithium

Mnemonic	LI
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green)
Special Instructions	Should be separated from cells ASAP, maximum 2 hours. Do not use tubes containing Lithium Heparin. Collect Immediately prior to next dose.

Luteinizing Hormone

Mnemonic	LH
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging Referred to Colchester

Magnesium

Mnemonic	MG
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)

Magnesium (Urine)

Mnemonic	UMGR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Malaria Smear

Mnemonic	MAL
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4 ml lavender (EDTA)
Special Instructions	Specimen should be drawn when patient's temperature is elevated
For Lab use only	Must be received at regional site within 4 hours of collection

Microalbumin (Screen)

Mnemonic	U ACR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container- no additive

Occult Blood

Mnemonic	STOB1, STOB2, STOB3
Specimen	Stool
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Hemoccult Sensa occult blood test is not to be used with gastric specimens. Collection instructions can be provided. Testing is not performed until 72 hrs after being applied to test card unless required STAT.

Osmolality - Plasma

Mnemonic	OSMO
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Do not uncap specimen.

Osmolality - Urine

Mnemonic	UOSMO
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container, random urine or 24-hour collection no preservative required.

Phosphorous

Mnemonic	PHOS
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Serum should be removed from cells within 2 hours.

Phosphorous (Urine)

Mnemonic	UPHOSR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
Special Instructions	N/A
Stability	Room temperature for 2 days
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Potassium (Urine)

Mnemonic	UKR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container

Pre-Albumin

Mnemonic	PREALB
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Serum or plasma should be separated from cells ASAP, with a maximum limit of 2 hours from time of collection.

Pregnancy Test (Urine)

Mnemonic	HCG
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container

Prolactin

Mnemonic	PROL
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube.
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging, Referred to Colchester

Prostate-Specific Antigen

Mnemonic	PSA
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube or 4 mL no additive (red)
For Lab Use Only	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red for 1 hour

Protein Creatinine Ratio

Mnemonic	U PCR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container.

PT/INR (PROTHROMBIN TIME)

Mnemonic	PTINR
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	2.7 ml blue (3.2% sodium citrate)
Special Instructions	Tube must be filled to the line. Do not refrigerate
Stability	24 hours at room temperature

Random Protein (Urine)

Mnemonic	UTPR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
Stability	Transport and store refrigerated upon arrival to the laboratory

Reticulocyte Count

Mnemonic	RETIC
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4ml mauve (EDTA)

Rheumatoid Factor

Mnemonic	RA
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	4 ml red (no anticoagulant)
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 1 hour after collection

Rubella IgG Antibody

Mnemonic	RUB
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging
	Test samples as soon as possible after collecting
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Salicylate

Mnemonic	SAL
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green)
Special Instructions	Separate from cells within 2 hours of collection

Semen Analysis

Mnemonic	SA
Specimen	Semen
Collection Tube	Sterile container
Special Instructions	Delivered to laboratory within 30 minutes at 37°C. Specimen only accepted Mon-Fri between 0800 and 1200.
Stability	30 minutes

Semen Analysis Post Vasectomy

Mnemonic	SAPV
Specimen	Semen
Collection Tube	Sterile container
Special Instructions	Delivered to laboratory within 30 minutes at 37°C. Specimen only accepted Mon-Fri between 0800 and 1200.
Stability	30 minutes

Sodium (Urine)

Mnemonic	UNAR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container

Syphilis IgG Antibody

Mnemonic	SYPHI
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 mL gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Tegretol (Carbamazepine)

Mnemonic	CARB
Specimen	Serum or plasma
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 ml red (no anticoagulant)
Special Instructions	Last dose needs to be noted in Meditech with date and time; separate within 2 hours of collection
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Total Iron Binding Capacity & % Saturation

Mnemonic	TIBC
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	4 mL no additive (red) or 3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Serum should be removed from the cells within 2 hours Allow SST to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging; red 1 hour

Total Carbon Dioxide

Mnemonic	CO2
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Do not uncap specimens prior to testing

Total Protein

Mnemonic	TP
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	SST Tubes do not affect results.

Triglycerides Level

Mnemonic	TRIG
Specimen	order LIPID if CHOL, LDL, and HDL are ordered as well.
Collection Tube	Plasma 3 mL lithium heparin (light green)

Troponin I - High Sensitivity

Mnemonic	TROPIHS
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	Serum or plasma should be separated from cells ASAP, with a maximum limit of 2 hours from time of collection.

Thyroid Stimulating Hormone

Mnemonic	TSH
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

Urea (BUN)

Mnemonic	UREA
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	SST Tubes do not affect BUN results.

Urea (Urine)

Mnemonic	UUREAR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Uric Acid

Mnemonic	URIC
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3 mL lithium heparin gel separator (light green)
Special Instructions	SST Tubes do not affect Uric acid results.

Uric Acid (Urine)

Mnemonic	UURICR
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Uric Acid Post Rasburicase

Mnemonic	URICRASB
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	3ml lithium heparin gel separator tube (light green)
Lab only	Centrifuge within 2 hours of collection
Special Instructions	Collected on ICE and MUST be run within 2 hours of collection

Urinalysis

Mnemonic	UA
Specimen	Urine
Collection Tube	Sterile urine container >3 mL
Special Instructions	Preferred sample is first morning urine, no preservatives. Store and transport at room temperature.

Vancomycin Random

Mnemonic	VANR
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green)
Special Instructions	Fill in the date and time of last dose. Do not use gel separators. Sodium heparin is recommended for collection when patients are receiving anticoagulants; separate from cells within 2 hours of collection.

Vancomycin Trough Level

Mnemonic	VANPRE
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green)
Special Instructions	Fill in the date and time of last dose. Do not use gel separators. Pre- Dose – collect immediately prior to next dose (within 30 minutes). Sodium heparin is recommended for collection when patients are receiving anticoagulant; separate from cells within 2 hours of collection.

Valproic Acid (Depakene) Level

Mnemonic	VALP
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	4 ml sodium heparin (dark green) or 4 mL no additive (red) (Do not use gel separators)
Special Instructions	Last dose needs to be noted in Meditech with date and time. Collect immediately prior to next dose, separate from cells within 2 hours of collection.
For Lab Use Only	Referred to Colchester

Venous Blood Gas (Standard and Extended)

Mnemonic	VBG (Standard) or VBGEX (Extended)
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	4 ml green (lithium heparin)
Special Instructions	Transport at room temperature.
Stability	Optimal analysis is within 30 minutes of collection, to a maximum of 60 minutes
Lab Use Only	Do not spin

Venous Cord Blood Gas

Mnemonic	VCOBG
Specimen	Cord Blood
Collection Tube	Syringe
Special Instructions	Optimal analysis is within 30 minutes of collection, to a maximum of 60 minutes. Please use clot catcher when running.

Vitamin B12

Mnemonic	B12
Specimen	Serum
Collection Tube	3.5 ml gold stoppered serum separator tube
Special Instructions	Allow to clot for 30 to 60 minutes before centrifuging

TRANSUFUSION MEDICINE TEST CATALOGUE

Information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens:

Accurate patient identification is critical. Follow Nova Scotia Health policy on Patient Identification located on the NSH intranet OP3-CL-SR-025. Follow Transfusion Medicine collection criteria located in the Venipuncture for blood Specimen Collection NSH policy CL-BP-040.

All Inpatients and ER patients must be wearing an armband before they are collected.

If markers PT2PINK or PT4PINK are present on large Meditech label, ensure additional tubes are collected.

Information required on requisition and specimen labels:

- i) Full patient name (First and Last Name)
- ii) Patient date of birth and patient Health Card number (HCN)
- iii) Transfusion Medicine Labelling Requirements:

- **TM Requisition (Large Label):**
 - ✓ Collector's Meditech ID or Independent Phlebotomy code
 - ✓ Collector's full signature
 - ✓ Date and Time of Collection
 - ✓ Full legible signature of witness. **Do not use initials for the first name.**
- **All specimen tube(s):**
 - ✓ Collector's Meditech ID
 - ✓ Collector's initials
 - ✓ Date and Time of Collection
 - ✓ Witness initials

- iv) See poster below for an example



Northern Zone COLLECTING AN ABO & SCREEN

FYI: EDTA Tubes are 6 mL with a Pink Top



1. PRIOR TO COLLECTION

Ensure there is an **order and consent to collect specimen**.

Obtain the correct specimen labels for your patient.

2. AT THE BEDSIDE: IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PATIENT

Collector and Witness verify that information on labels exactly matches the patient's ID armband.

- Spelling of all names
- Date of Birth
- Health Card Number (LIS Downtime)

Collect EDTA tube and any other necessary bloodwork from the patient. Fill the tube. If having difficulty, consult Transfusion Medicine.

3. SPECIMEN LABELS

Large Specimen Label:

The Meditech Mnemonic AND full signature is required for the Collector

Witness must sign full name on large label



Collector must ensure date and time of collection is on both specimen labels

Small Specimen Label:

Collector initials and writes Meditech Mnemonic on small label

Witness must initial small label

IN THE PRESENCE
OF THE PATIENT:
Place the small
label lengthwise
on tube



So the bar code
can be scanned

4. SEND TO TRANSFUSION MEDICINE

FOLLOW THE STEPS

Samples that do not conform to this process will be cancelled and a proper recollection required. It is imperative to patient safety that these steps be performed and documented exactly as described.

No exceptions are made.

Send labels with specimen(s) to the lab in the same specimen collection bag



DO NOT USE GEL PENS, PENCILS OR MARKERS



Refer to Policies CL-SR-025 Client Identification
or CL-BP-040 Venipuncture for Blood Specimen Collection - Policy and Procedure

Contact Transfusion Medicine Services for assistance

PPR-G-TM-0006 Effective date 2021/04/01

Developed by the NSPBCT

For an online version visit <http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/nova-scotia-provincial-blood-coordinating-program-7>

Antibody Screen

Mnemonic	ABS
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Crossmatch of Red Cell(s)

Mnemonic	GRRH & ABS & RC(s)
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Blood Bank QE2

Mnemonic	BBQE2
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	Patient presents with a Pre-op req from QEII with BBQE2 stamped on it. Collector to follow collection protocol for Transfusion Medicine specimens (pages 36-37) and complete the QEII requisition with collector and witness required information. Tube is to be directly referred out to the QEII.

Blood Bank Hold

Mnemonic	BBHOLD
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Blood Group/Type

Mnemonic	GRRH
Specimen	Plasma
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Indirect Antiglobulin Test

Mnemonic	IDAT
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Direct Antiglobulin Test (Coombs)

Mnemonic	DAT
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink) or 4 mL EDTA (lavender) EDTA (lavender) microtainer or a Red (non-additive) microtainer-refer to Appendix G: Maximum Total Pediatric Blood Collection Volume in the Venipuncture for Blood Specimen Collection policy and Procedure (CL-PB-040) prior to collecting blood on a Neonate.
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Cord DAT

Mnemonic	CORD DAT
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink) or 4 mL EDTA (lavender) or 10 mL serum (red)

Cord GRRH

Mnemonic	CORD GRRH
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink) or 4 mL EDTA (lavender) or 10 mL serum (red)

Cord HOLD

Mnemonic	CORD HOLD
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink) or 4 mL EDTA (lavender) or 10 mL serum (red)

Kleihauer

Mnemonic	KLQ
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA (pink) or 4 mL EDTA (lavender)
Special Instructions	Must be drawn as soon as possible after delivery or for a suspected hemorrhage, CBC sample is acceptable, provided it was collected following delivery or suspected hemorrhage. This is not a STAT test, WinRho is required to be given within 72 hours of the event.

Transfusion Reaction Investigation

Mnemonic	TRX
Specimen	Plasma or Serum
Collection Tube	6 mL EDTA pink top (EDTA) and 10mL serum (red)
Special Instructions	See information for collection of Transfusion Medicine specimens on pages 36-37.

Neonatal GRRH

Mnemonic	NEO-GRRH
Specimen	Whole Blood
Collection Tube	EDTA (lavender) microtainer or a Red (non-additive) microtainer-refer to Appendix G: Maximum Total Pediatric Blood Collection Volume in the Venipuncture for Blood Specimen Collection policy and Procedure (CL-PB-040) prior to collecting blood on a Neonate.

MICROBIOLOGY TEST CATALOGUE

Refer to Provincial Microbiology User's Manual PPHLN – M0008-02 for instructions and tests not found in this manual.

[provincial-microbiology-users-manual.pdf](#)

SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT

INTRODUCTION

This guide to specimen collection and transport provides information on the appropriate collection and handling of optimal specimens to ensure the best chance of detection of organisms causing infection. It is hoped this manual will be able to provide advice to give guidance in most circumstances. If a laboratory user has a question that remains unanswered after consulting the manual, a laboratory staff member or Microbiologist should be contacted.

Specimens often contain potentially infectious micro-organisms: consequently, it is essential that routine precautions be followed. All specimens should be considered hazardous, not only for the micro-organisms that are suspected of being present, but also for other infectious agents (such as Hepatitis B or HIV) that are present at low prevalence in the population. As carriage of these infectious agents is often not known either to the patient or to the physician or health care worker, the best defense against infection is to assume that the organisms are present and to take precautions accordingly.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

-Specimens are collected to provide information about organisms that are causing infection. When these organisms can be part of the normal flora, it is important to ensure that normal flora is excluded from the specimen as much as possible.

-Pathogens may be a small component of the organisms contained within a specimen collected from a site that possesses a normal flora. Use of transport medium, and refrigeration when transportation to the laboratory is required can be important to preserve the viability of organisms to allow their detection.

-When infection is caused by a complex flora, cultures may only detect a subset of the organisms present.

Extensive workup of isolates in these circumstances is often not helpful as results are delayed and do not reflect the range of organisms present. These specimens are reported reflecting the type of flora present.

Treatment is best chosen empirically.

- Specimens should be collected before starting antimicrobial agents wherever possible, without compromising care.

- When specimens are collected, it is important that the external surface of the specimen container and the requisition are not contaminated. Leaking specimens or specimens with evidence of external contamination will usually result in rejection of the specimen by the laboratory.

**NORTHERN ZONE PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE
ABERDEEN REGIONAL HOSPITAL TEST CATALOGUE**

- As soon as the specimen is collected and the container appropriately labelled, the specimen container should be placed in a plastic bag. The requisition should be completed and placed in the side pouch separate from the specimen container. The requisition should not be placed in the same part of the bag as the specimen.

NOTE:

- Use appropriate specimen collection material. Sterile collection material and aseptic technique must be used for collection of specimens using invasive procedures.
- For specimens from non-sterile sites, attempt to collect the specimen with as little contamination from the surrounding normal flora as possible. PPHLN: Provincial Microbiology User's Manual - 2017

PPHLN-M0008-029

- If a specimen is to be collected through intact skin, the skin should be disinfected thoroughly, allowing several minutes for the disinfectant to have effect. Examples of skin disinfectants include 70% alcohol, iodine solution, povidone-iodine, chlorhexidine, etc. If tincture of iodine is used, remove with 70% ethanol after procedure to prevent burning.
- An adequate amount of specimen should be collected. As a general rule, more is better than less. For example, a tube or urine container with 10 ml of pus is a better specimen than a swab. Small amounts of specimen are subject to drying, becoming aerobic, and other forms of deterioration, whereas larger volumes minimize the risk of false negative results.

SPECIMEN IDENTIFICATION AND INFORMATION

- The specimen should be collected in the standard containers available through hospital stores. These containers are selected to have low failure rates and may be selected to be compatible with instruments.
- Both the specimen container and the requisition must be labelled with:
 - o Full legal name
 - o Date of Birth
 - o Health Card Number (Government issued number are accepted)
 - o Date and time of collection
- The specimen source should be clearly and completely indicated to ensure that the appropriate processing takes place. For example, a "swab of the hip" taken in the OR from the joint would be processed/interpreted quite differently from a superficial swab of a hip ulcer.
- When specific diagnoses are being considered, they may have a bearing on the processing of the specimen; these diagnoses should be indicated in the clinical detail section on the requisition to ensure that the specific questions can be answered. This is particularly important if the suspect organism is unusual or requires extraordinary processing.
- Pertinent historical data (e.g. travel, association with a known outbreak, immunosuppression, or underlying disease) should be indicated in the clinical detail section of the requisition. For example, travel history is important in detection of species of organism that are not locally endemic.

SPECIMEN TRANSPORT – GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Specimens should be transported to the laboratory as quickly as possible.
- Specimens that cannot be transported rapidly should be refrigerated, with the following exceptions:
 - Blood cultures should be held at room temperature.
 - CSF cultures should be held at room temperature (meningococci are susceptible to cold). PPHLN: Provincial Microbiology User's Manual
 - Skin scrapings should be kept at room temperature as dermatophytes are cold sensitive.
 - Stool cultures for bacteriology should be mixed with enteric transport medium (Carey-Blair Enteric Transport medium) and kept refrigerated.
 - Stool for parasitology should be placed in a sterile container without any preservative and kept refrigerated. If patient has travelled out of country stool should be mixed with parasite transport medium (SAF) and kept at room temperature.
 - Stool for virology or cytotoxicity should be placed in a sterile container without any preservative. Store specimen refrigerated prior to transport on ice pack.
 - Swabs should be transported to the laboratory in Amies (eSwab) Transport Medium.
 - For anaerobic culture, as much fluid or pus as possible (up to 50ml) should be collected and sent without delay in a dry sterile container.

NOTE:

- Do not send specimens in syringes for culture. There are difficulties with maintenance of anaerobic conditions in plastic syringes. Recapping of needles is not recommended because of the risk of needle stick injury.
- If the volume of the specimen is very low, non-bacteriostatic saline (preservative free) may be drawn up and used to flush the syringe into a sterile container.

Abscess Culture

Mnemonic	ABSC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Special Instructions	Specify Site
Stability	2 days at 2-8°C

AFB (TB) Culture

Mnemonic	AFBC
Specimen	Sputum or Bronch Wash
Collection Tube	sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	For blood culture for AFB see Blood Culture Mycobacteria/TB
Stability	Do not refrigerate, send to Lab ASAP

Aspirate Culture

Mnemonic	ASPC
Specimen	Fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S Container
Special Instructions	Specify Site
Stability	2 days at 2 to 8°C

Body Fluid Culture

Mnemonic	BFC
Specimen	Fluid
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S Container
Special Instructions	Includes gram stain
Stability	2 days at 2-8°C

Blood Culture Aerobic

Mnemonic	BLDAER (Change Count to 1 in LIS if only one blood culture ordered, LIS defaults to 2)
Specimen	Add 5-10 ml of venous blood per adult bottle and 1-4 ml per pediatric bottle for pediatric patients. <u>Do Not</u> over fill culture bottles.
Collection Tube	Appropriate Blood Culture bottle.
Special Instructions	Discard first 1 mL of blood in a discard tube to avoid skin contamination of the blood culture. Change Count to 1 in LIS if only one blood culture ordered, LIS defaults to 2.
Stability	Deliver to lab ASAP at Room Temp

Blood Culture (use if aerobic and anaerobic blood cultures requested by Physician)

Mnemonic	BLDC (Change Count to 1 in LIS if only one blood culture ordered, LIS defaults to 2)
Specimen	Add 5-10 ml of venous blood per adult bottle and 1-4 ml per pediatric bottle for pediatric patients. <u>Do Not</u> over fill culture bottles.
Collection Tube	Appropriate Blood Culture bottle.
Special Instructions	Discard first 1 mL of blood in a discard tube to avoid skin contamination of the blood culture.
Stability	Deliver to lab ASAP at Room Temp

Blood Culture Mycobacteria/TB

Mnemonic	BLTB
Specimen	Add 3-5 ml of venous blood per adult bottle and 1-4 ml per pediatric bottle for pediatric patients. <u>Do Not</u> over fill culture bottles.
Collection Tube	Appropriate <u>Blood Culture bottle must be obtained from QEI</u> prior to collection.
Special Instructions	Discard first 1 mL of blood in a discard tube to avoid skin contamination of the blood culture.
Stability	Deliver to lab ASAP at Room Temp

Bone Marrow Culture (aerobic and anaerobic)

Mnemonic	BMCB
Specimen	Bone Marrow Biopsy
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S Container
Special Instructions	Do Not add any solution to bottle (i.e. Saline)
Stability	Deliver to Lab ASAP

Bone Culture (aerobic and anaerobic)

Mnemonic	BONC
Specimen	Bone
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S Container
Special Instructions	Do Not add any solution (i.e. Saline)
Stability	Deliver to Lab ASAP

Clostridium difficile (Stool) (C.diff)

Mnemonic	CDIF
Specimen	Stool, liquid (not formed)
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S Container
Stability	Collect and refrigerate 2-8°C and deliver to lab same day or within 24hrs.

Chlamydia/GC

Mnemonic	CHLGPCR or UCHLGPCR
Specimen	Aptima Swab (female) Vaginal or Urine (male)
Collection Tube	Aptima swab (female) or Sterile C/S container (male)
Special Instructions	The preferred specimen for women are vaginal swabs. Urine is the preferred specimen for male (first 20mL voided, patient must not have urinated in the past 2 hrs).
Stability	Aptima swab 60 days at Room Temperature, refrigerate urine 2-8°C stable for 7 days

COVID

Special Instructions	See COVID in Lab section of this manual as test is ordered in the LAB Module in LIS.
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CSF Culture

Mnemonic	CSFC
Specimen	CSF
Collection Tube	CSF Collection Tube # 3
Special Instructions	Deliver to lab ASAP

CSF ME PANEL

Mnemonic	CSFPANEL
Specimen	CSF
Collection Tube	CSF Tube (Tube with most volume preferred sample)
Special Instructions	CSF PCR Approval Form required

Ear Culture

Mnemonic	EARC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Eye Culture

Mnemonic	EYEC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Fungal Culture Dermatophytes

Mnemonic	FUCD
Specimen	Scrapings
Collection Tube	Kit available from lab, dark paper.
Special Instructions	See Provincial Microbiology user's manual.

Fungal Culture Systemic

Mnemonic	FUCS
Specimen	Bronchial Wash
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Test performed at QEII

Miscellaneous Aerobic Culture

Mnemonic	MISC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Special Instructions	Specify Site. Includes gram stain.
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Mouth Culture

Mnemonic	MOUC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

MRSA SCREEN

Mnemonic	MRSA
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab for screen
Special Instructions	1 swab for both MRSA and VRE (swab Nares-both sides then rectum) Enter MRSA source CONR and VRE source as REC
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Ova and Parasite Screen

Mnemonic	OPSR
Specimen	C/S Container or yellow top (if travel outside of country)
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Test not indicated for patients in hospital >72hrs. Indicate if travel outside of country and test request will be changed to OPCT and sent to QEII for O&P microscopy.
Stability	Collect and refrigerate 2-8°C and deliver to lab same day or within 24hrs

Pinworm Examination

Mnemonic	PINW
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Vaseline Swap- obtain from lab as required.
Special Instructions	Examination will be performed at QEII.
Stability	Test must be performed within 2 days.

Sputum Culture

Mnemonic	SPUC
Specimen	C/S Container
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Indicate if expectorated, suction, induced or Bronchial wash specimen.
Stability	Collect and refrigerate 2-8°C and deliver to lab same day or within 24hrs.

Stool Culture

Mnemonic	STOC
Specimen	Stool
Collection Tube	Cary Blair (white top) container or Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Test not indicated for in patients in hospital >72hrs.
Stability	Collect and refrigerate 2-8°C and deliver to lab same day or within 24hrs.

Stool Viral Culture

Mnemonic	VIRC
Specimen	Stool
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Specify virus requested. Test will be performed at QEII.
Stability	Collect and refrigerate 2-8°C and deliver to lab same day or within 24hrs.

Throat Culture

Mnemonic	THRC
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	amies (eSwab) agar swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Tissue Culture

Mnemonic	TISC
Specimen	Tissue
Collection Tube	Sterile C/S container
Special Instructions	Specify Site. Includes gram stain. Deliver to lab ASAP.
Stability	Keep at room temperature and deliver to lab ASAP.

Trichomonas (Wet Prep Trichomonas)

Mnemonic	TRICH
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	Plain swab with warm saline added and delivered to lab immediately after collection.
Special Instructions	Plain swab with warm saline added and delivered to lab immediately after collection. Will be rejected if not collected properly.
Stability	Must be received in Lab warm

Umbilical Culture

Mnemonic	UMBC
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	amies (eSwab) agar swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Urine Culture

Mnemonic	URNC
Specimen	urine
Collection Tube	sterile C/S container
Stability	Refrigerate 2-8°C. Must be cultured within 24hs of collection.

Vaginal Strep Group B Screen Culture

Mnemonic	VAGB
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	amies (eSwab) agar swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Vaginal Culture

Mnemonic	VAGC- do not order unless <12 years old or requested by specialist.
	Order VAGS (Vaginitis screen) for patient >12 years old.
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	amies (eSwab) agar swab
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Vaginitis Screen

Mnemonic	VAGS
Specimen	swab
Collection Tube	amies (eSwab) agar swab
Special Instructions	for patients >12 years old.
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Viral Culture

Mnemonic	VIRC
Specimen	swab or stool
Collection Tube	COPAN UTM or Viral Transport Media for swab or sterile C/S container for stool
Special Instructions	Specify virus requested. Refrigeration is recommended once collected. Deliver to lab ASAP.
Stability	Refrigerate after collection and freeze if delay in sending to reference lab.

VRE SCREEN

Mnemonic	VRE
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab for screen
Special Instructions	1 swab for both MRSA and VRE (swab Nares-both sides then rectum) Enter MRSA source CONR and VRE source as REC Swab MUST have visible stool or swab will be rejected for VRE
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Wound Culture

Mnemonic	WOUC
Specimen	Swab
Collection Tube	Amies (eSwab) Agar Swab
Special Instructions	Specify Site. Includes gram stain.
Stability	2 days 2-8°C

Revision History

Version	Date	Reason	Revised By
V2.0	2025-10-15	<p>Archived Mono Test</p> <p>Added eSwab to all micro specimens that used to state Amies swab</p> <p>Update wording for Creatinine Clearance portion of test catalogue</p> <p>Added EDTA tube types to DAT specimens; both microtainer and 4mL</p> <p>Updated required patient identifiers for Microbiology specimens</p> <p>Referring: CA 125, CEA, LH, FSH, and Prolactin to Colchester</p> <p>Added IGA, IGG, and IGM to the test catalogue as these tests are performed at ARH</p>	Brandon McLellan, PA SR MLT
V3.0	2025-12-5 2026-01-28	<p>Added that A1C's are now referred to Colchester. Changed clotting time from 1 hour to 30 to 60 minutes for SST tubes</p> <p>Added ml to electrolyte Lithium heparin tube. Added CSF ME Panel to Test Catalogue</p> <p>Added Uric Acid Post Rasburicase to Catalogue</p> <p>Added shipping instructions for urinalysis</p>	Brandon McLellan, PA SR MLT Holly Mosher, PA SR MLT