

Specimen Collection Guide - Specimen Handling and Transportation

*Public Health Laboratories
Public Health Ontario*

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Specimen Handling and Transportation

Specimens must be collected in an appropriate specimen container to maintain the integrity of the specimen.

To obtain information on the type of container or collection kit that should be used to collect the sample, consult the Specimen Collection section of the Public Health Laboratories at <http://www.oahpp.ca/>

Collection information is provided in the Kit Instruction sheets for each kit. To view the Collection Kit instructions follow the link to the Specimen Collection site at <http://www.oahpp.ca/services/specimen-collection-guide.html>

After collection, specimens should be labeled with two (2) identifiers, placed in a plastic bag and sealed. Ensure all container lids are tightly secured before packing.

Most specimens should be stored between 2-8°C however there are exceptions. Specific handling/storage information is included in the Kit Instruction sheet for each kit.

Packing

All specimens must be packaged carefully to avoid breakage or leakage of the specimen. All diagnostic specimens, cultures or biological products must be packed in compliance with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations. To view these regulations follow the link provided: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/safety-menu.html>

Complete one (1) Public Health Lab requisition per patient. Requisitions are available at: <http://www.oahpp.ca/resources/laboratory-materials.html>

Never place the requisition inside the plastic bag with the specimen. Place in outside pouch of clear plastic bag.

All packages sent to the PHO-Public Health Laboratories must be constructed, filled, closed and secured so that under normal conditions of transport, including handling, there will be no accidental release of the substance that could endanger public or employee safety.

The PHO-Public Health Laboratories provides approved specimen transport bags (TC125 IB, Blue Transport Bags) to our clients for surface/road transport of Category B specimens. To obtain Blue Transport Bags for transporting specimens to a Public Health Laboratory or to arrange the pick-up of a Public Health Laboratory specimen; call the Customer Service Centre at 416-235-6556 or 1-877-604-4567 or your local Public Health Laboratory. For information about Lab locations and Contact Information visit our web site at: <http://www.oahpp.ca/services/laboratory-locations.html>

Place all bagged samples, racks etc in a large Zip lock bag or plastic insert provided with the Blue Bag. All packages must meet the requirements of the National Standards of Canada CAN/CGSB-43.125-2003. PART 1 – 4.1 Type 1A (TC-125-1A) is used where a high integrity package is required. PART 2 - Type 1B (TC-125-1B) is suitable for most routine shipments of diagnostic specimens.

Specimen Transportation

The packaging and transportation of all diagnostic specimens, cultures or biological products must comply with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations. All packages sent to the Ontario Public Health Laboratories must be constructed, filled, closed and secured so that under normal conditions of transport, including handling, there will be no accidental release of the substance that could endanger public or employee safety.

All packages must meet the requirements of the National Standards of Canada CAN/CGSB-43.125-2003. PART 1 – 4.1 Type 1A (TC-125-1A) is used where a high integrity package is required. PART 2 - Type 1B (TC-125-1B) is suitable for most routine shipments of diagnostic specimens.

Further information regarding these regulations and compliance packaging can be obtained from the Transport Canada web site at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/moc-infectious-cgsb43125-281.html>

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