

Instructions for Collecting and Submitting Sputum Specimens to DCLS

Specimen Collection Kits:

1. Order sputum collection kits by emailing **DCLS_SSSKits@dgs.virginia.gov**.
2. Upon order receipt, kits will be shipped within 3 business days. Cold packs are available upon request.
3. **IMPORTANT: Do not mix or substitute collection kit components.**

Kit Contents:

- 1 – 50 mL polypropylene conical tube
- 1 – 95kPa bag with absorbent pad
- 1 – Instructions for collecting and submitting sputum specimens to DCLS (20242)

Specimen Collection:

1. **Collect** the first morning sputum in the screw cap 50 mL conical tube furnished by DCLS. A minimum specimen volume of **5 mL** is recommended. Do not submit upper respiratory samples including spit or nasal secretions. Tighten cap securely.
2. **Label** the conical tube containing the sputum specimen with:
 - a. Patient's full name
 - b. Unique identifier (i.e. Patient ID, DOB)
 - c. Date and time of collection
3. The patient name and unique identifier written on the tube must be an **EXACT** match to the WebVision electronic test order.
4. Place only one label on the specimen container. Ensure label does not extend to the conical end of the tube or wrap over the lid.
5. **Store specimens refrigerated (2-8°C)** until shipment.
6. Submit sputum specimens to DCLS as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours of collection.

Specimen and Test Order Submission:

1. Submit specimen and electronic test request to DCLS on the same day.
2. Enter specimen information into the WebVision database and generate a dispatch sheet.
3. Package samples for transport to the laboratory as follows: (Note: In compliance with the shipping regulations detailed in IATA 1.5 and 49 CFR Section 1720700 [U.S. Department of Transportation])
 - a. Place the **labeled** 50 mL conical tube containing the specimen inside the specimen transport bag with absorbent material.
 - b. Place any papers (if applicable) in the exterior open pouch on the transport bag.
 - c. Seal the transport bag.
 - d. DO NOT place patient ID labels on the transport bag.
 - e. Place specimens with **cold packs** in a cooler addressed to DCLS. Specimens should be transported at **2-8°C (preferred), 2-30°C is acceptable**.
 - f. Specimens should be submitted as soon as possible but must be received and tested at DCLS within 7 days of collection.
4. Log all containers for transport to DCLS on the ACE website (accuratecourierexpress.com) with a single ACE barcode per container by 4 p.m.
5. Place the cooler in the DCLS courier pick-up site at your facility for next day delivery to DCLS.

Note: If specimens are not received at the appropriate transport temperature and/or are not received and tested within 7 days of collection, the specimen will be rejected

Contact Information:

1. To obtain test reports, call 804-648-4480 ext. 142.
2. For questions regarding Mycobacteria testing call 804-648-4480 ext. 255 (laboratory) or ext. 210 (Microbial Reference Group Manager).