

**COLLECTION NOTES FOR PATIENTS
SPUTUM SPECIMENS FOR CULTURE**

Sputum (or phlegm) samples are better when collected first thing in the morning and brought to the laboratory on the same day, as soon as possible.

1. If your request form has ROUTINE ticked we need only **one** sputum specimen.
2. Label the specimen pottle with your full name, Date of Birth and date and time of collection
3. Remove the lid of the specimen pottle being careful not to touch the inside of the pottle.
4. Avoid collecting saliva if possible. Perform a 'deep cough' to produce sputum (take several deep breaths before each cough can help). A correct sputum specimen is one which you feel has come up from being in your chest or lungs. Saliva is totally unsatisfactory.
5. Collect the sputum sample directly into the specimen container and screw the lid down firmly.
6. Deliver the complete specimen, along with the request form, to the laboratory on the same day. Store your sample in a cool place (not your fridge) if there is any delay.

If you have any problems please contact the Laboratory. Phone **(03) 769 7797**.

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