

MICROBIOLOGY
SPECIMEN TRANSPORT GUIDELINES

Specimen	Transport System/Container	Maximum Time (Hours) Viable	Refrigerated 4 C.	Room Temperature 25 C.
Anaerobes Only	Gel(Starplex) Starswab or Port-A-Cult Vial	24 Hours		X
Blood Culture	Bactec Blood Culture Bottles	24 Hours		X
Body Fluids CSF & Synovial Other body fluids	Sterile Container Sterile Container	ASAP 24 Hours		X X
Bone Marrow	Sterile Container	ASAP		X
Clostridium difficile toxin (A & B)	Clean Container		X - Viable 72 hours	X- Viable 4 hours
Ova and Parasite Screen (Cryptosporidium/Giardia) Ova and Parasites, Comprehensive	Formalin & PVA Para-pak for O&P or Clean Container	2 months 24 Hours	X	X
Respiratory Brochial Wash Naso-pharyngeal Sputum Throat Culture Throat for Rapid Strep Ear Eye	Sterile Container Mini-Tip CultureSwab Sterile Container CultureSwab Non Gel CultureSwab Non Gel (Starplex unacceptable)	24 Hours 24 Hours 24 Hours 24 Hours 24 Hours		 X X X X X X X
Stool Culture Fecal WBC	Clean container or Parapak for C&S	24 Hours 3 Days	X	X
Urine	Grey Top boric Acid Tube Clean container	3 days room temp 24 Hours	X	X

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Tissue	Sterile Container	24 Hours		X
Wounds	Gel Starplex Starswab	24 Hours		X
Acid-fast Bacilli (AFB) Culture & Smear	Sterile Container or Gel (Starplex) Starswab (Please collect 3 Sputum samples for TB in an 8-24 hour period on patients with a positive chest x-ray)	72 Hours	X	
Catheter Tips	Sterile Container	8Hours		X
MRSA Screens	Gel (Starplex) Starswab Sterile Container	24 Hours		X
VRE Screens	Gel (Starplex) Starswab Sterile Container	24 Hours		X
Influenza (Rapid Test)	M4 Transport Media or Sterile Container with saline or non gel culture swab (nose)	48 Hours	X	
		2 hours	X	
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) Rapid Test	Nasal Wash in saline in Sterile Container	48 Hours	X	
Viral Culture	M4 Transport Media or Sterile container for some Specimen Types	48 Hours	X	
Fungal / Yeast Culture	Sterile Container or Gel (Starplex) Starswab	48 Hours	X	
Genital Culture(Routine)	Gel Starplex Starswab	24 Hours	X	
Genital Strep Screens		24 Hours	X	
Genital Wet Preps		4 Hours	X	