
TRANSPORTING AND TRACKING SPECIMENS

TRANSPORTING SPECIMENS

Specimens may be brought directly to the lab from within the hospital. Manually transporting the specimens must be done by placing the packaged specimens into the black specimen transport container marked “diagnostic specimens”. This bag is specifically designated for specimen transport use.

Laboratory staff pick up and transport surgical specimens to the pathology lab. There are special ergonomic carts designated specifically to handle the various size specimen containers. The cart carrier acts as the secondary transport container to prevent exposure to staff and the public. The carrier also serves to protect patient information.

Pneumatic Tube: A variety of hospital units and the Notre Dame Pavilion are connected to the main lab via a computerized pneumatic tube system. The tube system allows for the speedy transport of specimens from critical units directly to the laboratory. The specimens travel by special padded carrier to their designated location. Their arrival is announced with an audible bell within minutes of the original departure. Please refer to the “Computerized Pneumatic Tube Policy” located on the CMC intranet under Administrative policies. This policy speaks to the general operation, limitations, training and maintenance of the Computerized Tube System.

Outreach specimens are picked up by the courier and placed in temperature appropriate coolers for transport. The coolers are kept in the controlled environment inside the vehicle to avoid exposure to the extreme seasonal temperatures in the trunk. Specimens are transported to the laboratory within the time required to maintain specimen integrity.

TRACKING SPECIMENS

It is the intent of Catholic Medical Center to ensure that all laboratory specimens accepted into the facility reach the appropriate testing area and have a traceable path from the specimen collection to receipt in the final testing location under safe, ergonomic, and HIPAA compliant conditions.

The ultimate goal is to integrate the various department systems to allow test order placement, tracking and receipt of these specimens electronically. The organization will work to that essential end.

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Current Tracking:

In-house specimens are managed by specific lab department pending lists, tracking specimens that are collected but not received in the lab.

Specimens are electronically tracked from the Patient Service Centers to the lab to eliminate lost specimens.

Tracking of Operating Room, Endoscopy and Radiology specimens is accomplished manually by the lab registration staff via sign off sheet.

Courier tracking for clients is limited to tracking at the specimen level only.