

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

GENERAL INFORMATION

Sputum samples are usually collected to check for chest infections, but may occasionally be used to check for cells lining the airways. In some cases 3 specimens will be collected on 3 consecutive days to increase the yield of the test.

COLLECTION PROCEDURE

1. Sputum collections should be collected directly into a sterile yellow top jar. The specimen should be from a good deep cough. Try and avoid spitting out saliva.
2. Where possible sputum collections should be an early morning collection and should be organised to be delivered to a collection centre on the same day when possible. However, if they are collected over a weekend they may be stored in a refrigerator until Monday morning.
3. Requests for Sputum examination are generally one random collection unless your doctor specifies that consecutive collections are required. Collections for cell examination (Cytology) and TB are usually collected in sets of 3 on 3 consecutive days. Always try to produce an early morning collection for these tests.

Note:

It is preferable to have the collections on 3 consecutive days but it is appreciated that this is sometimes difficult to achieve and so they can be collected with a day or two lapsing in between collections.

If you have any additional questions or require further information please contact one of our pathology collectors at the room you attended or the collection Co-ordinator at the Central Laboratory on **9736 7000**.