

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
MICROBIOLOGY SPECIMEN HANDLING**

Effective Date: January, 2010

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date:

Revised Date: 5/12

Policy No: MB 105.01A

Origin: Microbiology

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 1 of 4

PRINCIPLE: To ensure proper handling of microbiology specimen.

PROCEDURE:

1. Collection and ordering: All cultures are to be ordered into the computer system and labeled with the label generated by the system. Source of the culture is to be documented on each specimen. Collector Id and collection date/time are to be documented on large portion of lab label.

Urine Cultures

- a. Clean-voided midstream specimen is the best specimen for a culture.
 - b. Patient or nurse preparing patient should follow the clean catch procedure.
 - c. A sterile container from lab must be used.
 - d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label.
 - e. Source (cath, clean cath, or void) must be written on specimen label
 - f. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- *IMPORTANT sterile urine should be brought to the lab immediately or refrigerated immediately

Feces Cultures

- a. When possible Stools for cultures should be collected prior to administration of barium enema.
- b. Use a well cleaned bedpan or sterile container for the collection of the specimen. No tissue or other debris may be in the stool.
- c. Patients should be warned of passing urine at the same time of collection. This may affect stool analysis
- d. Specimens should be collected in a Cary Blair Transport Media Container (green top)
- e. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label
- f. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- g. Stool specimens should be brought to the lab immediately.

Sputum Cultures

- a. Prerinsing the mouth if possible will remove contaminants such as food.
- b. A first morning specimen is best, since it represents pulmonary secretions accumulated overnight.
- c. Specimens should be collected in a sterile container with a tightly fitted cap. Care should be taken not to contaminate the cap.
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label. Source of specimen must be indicated on label
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. The sputum specimen should be delivered immediately to the lab.

Eye Cultures

- a. Obtain appropriate culturette
- b. Collect purulent material and scrapings with swab. When the specimens from both eyes are submitted, identify each specimen as right or left eye.
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label.
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
MICROBIOLOGY SPECIMEN HANDLING**

Effective Date: January, 2010

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date:

Revised Date: 5/12

Policy No: MB 105.01A

Origin: Microbiology

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 2 of 4

- f. Submit promptly to the laboratory

Mouth Cultures

- a. Obtain appropriate culturette
- b. Rub swab across area of inflammation or ulceration to obtain a culture.
- c. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label
- d. Return swab to carrier
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send it to the lab immediately. If trench mouth or thrush is suspected submit two slides for staining.

Nose Cultures

- a. Obtain appropriate culturette
- b. Insert culturette swab into the nares and rotate gently.
- c. Return swab to carrier.
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen and requisition to the lab immediately

MRSA Screen

- a. Obtain and use the recommended swab to collect the nasal specimen.
- b. Insert the swab approximately 1 inch into the nostril and roll the swab in the nostril 5 times. Then insert the same swab into the second nostril and roll the swab 5 times. One swab is to be used for both nostrils.
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label
- e. Return swab to carrier
- f. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- g. Send specimen to the lab immediately

Throat Cultures

- a. Obtain appropriate culturette
- b. Rub swab firmly over back of throat, tonsils and areas of inflammation or ulceration.
- c. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated lab
- d. Return swab to carrier
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen to the lab immediately

Nasopharyngeal Cultures

- a. A flexible swab is inserted through the nose rotating gently, allowing it to bend in the nasopharynx.
- b. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- e. Send specimen to the lab immediately

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
MICROBIOLOGY SPECIMEN HANDLING**

Effective Date: January, 2010

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date:

Revised Date: 5/12

Policy No: MB 105.01A

Origin: Microbiology

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 3 of 4

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
MICROBIOLOGY SPECIMEN HANDLING**

Effective Date: January, 2010

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date:

Revised Date: 5/12

Policy No: MB 105.01A

Origin: Microbiology

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 4 of 4

Abscess Cultures

- a. Cleanse the abscess and surrounding area with antiseptic.
- b. Obtain an aspirated specimen with a sterile 25 gauge needle attached to a syringe. Submit either in a completely labeled culturette or sterile tube. Do not submit in syringe with needle.
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label. Source of specimen must be included on label.
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen and requisition to the lab immediately

Cellulitis Cultures

- a. In nonpurulent infections such as cellulitis, a specimen can sometimes be obtained by aspiration the most active area of inflammation which is usually the advancing border, with a 25 gauge needle attached to a syringe containing 0.2 ml of sterile saline. If a specimen is non-obtainable by initial aspiration, inject the saline and aspirate again.
- b. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label. Source of specimen must be included on label
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Deliver to lab in a properly labeled sterile container (ie red topped tube).
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen to the lab immediately

Wound Cultures

- a. Using culturette, select the site of drainage to culture.
- b. Culture drainage with swab.
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label. Source must be included on the label.
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen and requisition to the lab immediately

Pustule Cultures

- a. Swab pustule and surrounding area with betadine working from pustule out. Allow to dry.
- b. Take a 25 gauge needle and rupture pustule.
- c. Culture fluid with culturette.
- d. Return swab to carrier
- e. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label. Source must be included on label.
- f. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- g. Send specimen and requisition to the lab immediately

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
MICROBIOLOGY SPECIMEN HANDLING**

Effective Date: January, 2010

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date:

Revised Date: 5/12

Policy No: MB 105.01A

Origin: Microbiology

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 5 of 4

Ear Cultures

- a. Cleanse external ear thoroughly with antiseptic.
- b. Collect the specimen of purulent discharge from the external ear with swab culturette.
- c. Return swab to carrier
- d. Specimen should be labeled with computer generated label .
- e. Collector ID, and Date and time of collection are documented on large lab label
- f. Send specimen and requisition to the lab immediately
- g. Use sterile equipment and swab to collect material from the inner ear.
- h. When specimens from both ears are being submitted, identify each specimen as right or left ear

2. Labeling

All specimens should be properly labeled and accompanied by a completed requisition. The requisition must include the date and time of collection and who collected the specimen. Requisition is the Large portion of the lab label.

3. Delivery to the laboratory

Deliver the specimen promptly to the laboratory. If the specimen is left sitting for any length of time, the viability of organisms is jeopardized. It is important that all specimens for culturing, including urinalysis be promptly delivered to the laboratory.

4. Preservation of Specimens:

All urine cultures must be refrigerated immediately, all other cultures will be kept at room temperature.

5. Safety:

Procedures for safe handling of specimens (tightly sealed containers, no external spillage) should be followed