

# How to Collect a Sputum Sample for Your Lab Test

## Collecting a Sputum Sample

Your health care provider has ordered a sputum (also called mucus or phlegm) collection test. The test that is circled on the other side is the one you will need to do.

## Before You Collect Your Sample

- You will be given the collection container(s) for your lab test before you are sent home.
- Write the following information on each of your collection containers:
  - your full name
  - date of collection
  - time of collection.
- Rinse or gargle with water.

## How to Collect Your Sample

- Collect only one sample per day.
- Collect the sample(s) right away when you wake up from sleeping. Cough as deeply as possible to raise the sputum from your lungs (instead of saliva from your mouth).
- If you have problems collecting your sample, call your health care provider.

Follow the directions below to complete your sputum collection test.

Test	Container	Directions
<b>Sputum Culture, Stain</b>	sterile screw top container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collect one sample.</li> <li>■ For best results, return the sample to the clinic within 2 hours. If this is not possible, keep the sample at room temperature and return it within 24 hours.</li> </ul>
<b>AFB Culture, Stain</b>	sterile screw top container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collect a total of three samples on separate days.</li> <li>■ Collect each sample in a different cup.</li> <li>■ Keep the samples in the refrigerator.</li> <li>■ Return all of the samples to the clinic at one time.</li> </ul>
<b>Fungus Culture</b>	sterile screw top container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collect a total of three samples on separate days.</li> <li>■ Collect each sample in a different cup.</li> <li>■ Keep the samples in the refrigerator.</li> <li>■ Return each sample to the clinic within 2 days of collection.</li> </ul>
<b>Fungus/Pneumocystis, Stain</b>	sterile screw top container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collect one sample.</li> <li>■ Keep the sample in the refrigerator.</li> <li>■ Return the sample to the clinic within 24 hours.</li> </ul>
<b>Sputum for Cytology</b>	sterile screw top container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collect one sample.</li> <li>■ Keep the sample in the refrigerator.</li> <li>■ Return the sample to the clinic within 24 hours.</li> </ul>