

# Patient Instructions for Collection of Sputum-Cytology

The following instructions are intended to help you collect the correct specimen for the test your doctor has requested.

First read the instructions carefully, make sure you are prepared, and then follow each of the steps to ensure proper collection

An early morning deep cough specimen is required. The sample is to be expectorated (coughed-up) directly into the specimen collection bottle. If more than one sample is ordered, collect one specimen per day per bottle until the total ordered is reached.

1. The specimen obtained should be the result of a deep cough and be of a thick nature, **not saliva**. Collections of an early morning specimen before breakfast facilitates obtaining such sputum since respiratory secretions will pool overnight.
2. Prior to collecting the sample, rinse your mouth with water. For patients with dentures, remove the dentures first.
3. Cough directly into the specimen container.
4. Screw the cap on the bottle tightly to prevent leakage.
5. Wash your hands immediately.
6. Write your name, date of birth and the collection date and time on the container label.
7. Place the specimen in the refrigerator.
8. Refrigerate the specimen until ready for transport to the lab.
9. After collection of the required specimen(s) submit them to the laboratory within 48 hours of collection of the last specimen.