

	New Mexico VA Healthcare System Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Service	Issue Date: 03/18/16	Document Identifier REF POC.0048
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Title: CBOC Lab Specimen Acceptability Reference Guide			
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Policy

Due to specimen stability constraints, some testing cannot be sent to the Raymond G. Murphy Medical Center Laboratory for analysis from Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). General guidelines are summarized in the table below.

Specimen Handling Requirements

Specimen handling requirements for laboratory tests are found in the Lab Test Description Information file in VISTA and in the Lab Guide available in CPRS.

Questions regarding specific specimen requirements may be referred to P&LMS staff. The Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Service (P&LMS) is available 24 hours/7 days a week.

Alternatives for Specimen Collection for Testing with Limited Stability

Blood draw is available at the Medical Center Outpatient Lab, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 4:30 pm. Note that patient travel will not be compensated for a lab draw.

Patients can be referred to a local laboratory for fee-basis lab work. Non-VA Medical Care Program policies and procedures must be followed.

STAT or ASAP Requests

STAT/ASAP urgency is not available for testing sent to the Medical Center Lab.

Patient condition dictates test urgency. Refer STAT/ASAP requests to a local lab.

General Guidelines

Contact P&LMS for test specific processing and shipping instructions whenever you are unsure.

When “serum” and “plasma” are indicated as the sample type, separate from the red blood cells and ship in a transport tube. Write the type of tube on the transport tube label: “green”, “plain red”, “gold”.

Test Area	✓ OK to Send	⊘ Do Not Send
Hematology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CBC with Differential: stable at 2-8°C for 48 hours ▪ Reticulocyte Counts: stable at 2-8°C for 24 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sedimentation Rate/ESR/Sed Rate ▪ Body Fluids for Cell Counts
Coagulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PT/INR: stable at 18-24°C for 24 hours in <u>unopened</u> tube Do not centrifuge Do not ship on ice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PTT ▪ Special coagulation studies such as factor assays

Test Area	✓ OK to Send	⊘ Do Not Send
Chemistry & Reference Lab Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic Metabolic Panel ▪ Comprehensive Metabolic Panel ▪ Lipid Panel ▪ Liver Function Tests (LFT) ▪ PSA ▪ TSH ▪ PTH: serum or EDTA plasma stable 2-8°C for 48 hours ▪ BNP: EDTA plasma stable at 2-8°C for 3 days ▪ Troponin: dark green lithium heparin plasma stable at 2-8°C for 7 days. Refrigerate sample within 2 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frozen serum or plasma. For example: renin activity, antidiuretic hormone (ADH). ▪ Tests requiring special handling or with very short stability time. For example: ammonia, ionized calcium, acid phosphatase.
Urine Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urine chemistry– stable at 2-8°C for 3 days For example: urine protein, creatinine, sodium, potassium ▪ Urine Microalbumin – stable at 2-8°C for ≤ 14 days ▪ Urine Tox Screen - stable at 2-8°C for 5 days ▪ Buprenorphine Screen - stable at 2-8°C for 4 days ▪ Oxycodone & Methadone Screens - stable at 2-8°C for 2 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urine in a tube containing any type of preservative
Urinalysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ship in a tube specifically for Urinalysis such as the BD Urinalysis Preservative Tube. Stable for 72 hours if preserved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unpreserved urine ▪ Urine for eosinophils
Microbiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriately collected and preserved specimens labeled with specific collection site. For example: BBL Culture Swab for Aerobes/Anaerobes for left earlobe wound culture ▪ Urine Cultures: ship in a preservative tube specifically for urine culture such as the BD C&S Preservative Plus Urine Tube. Stable for 48 hours if preserved. ▪ <i>Clostridium difficile</i> (<i>C. diff</i>): stable 5 days at 2-8°C. Only watery or loose stool with no preservative is acceptable. ▪ Stool Culture/Stool for Ova & Parasites - Preservative kit is available from P&LMS. ▪ Fecal Occult Blood/FIT kits: stable 8-15 days at room temp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Body fluids for culture
Cytology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urine or sputum samples preserved in Thin Prep CytoLyt cytology fixative solution ▪ Standard Form 515 must accompany all samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unpreserved specimens
Thin Prep Pap Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cervical collections preserved in Thin Prep Pap Test PreservCyt solution ▪ Quest Diagnostics order form must accompany all samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unpreserved specimens
Histology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preserve biopsies or other tissue for histological exam in formalin fixative solution ▪ Standard Form 515 must accompany all samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unpreserved specimens