

STORAGE OF SPECIMENS

Biochemistry and Haematology specimens

The majority of specimens should be stored at room temperature, to reach the laboratory in the next courier pick up.

Blood samples should never be refrigerated unless specified.

Specimen type	Temperature		Comments
Blood		Room Temperature	All tubes require same day testing. Specimens should be delivered to lab within 4 hours.
	EDTA (purple top)	Room Temperature	It is critically important to mix the blood with the anticoagulant. Tubes must be filled to the line exactly to ensure correct ratio of anticoagulant to blood.
	Coagulation samples (blue top)	Room Temperature	It is critically important to mix the blood with the anticoagulant. Tubes must be filled to the line exactly to ensure correct ratio of anticoagulant to blood. Must be received in lab within 4 hours of collection.

Microbiology specimens

Blood Culture		Room Temperature	
Urine	Microscopy and culture	Refrigerate after collection	Refrigerate prior to transport to lab
	Chlamydia	Room Temperature	
	Cytology	Refrigerate	Refrigerate prior to transport to lab
	AFB	Refrigerate	Pathologist approval required Must be 50 ml in each container
Faeces	Microscopy and culture	Room Temperature	
	Ova and parasites	Room Temperature	
Faeces reducing substances		Freeze	Specimen <u>must</u> stay frozen in transit
Semen analysis for fertility		Body temperature	Patient to deliver to Carbine Road Collection Centre within 1 hour
Semen – post vasectomy		Room Temperature	Can be delivered to any collection centre.
Sputum	Microscopy and culture	Room Temperature	Refrigerate overnight if unavoidable delays
	Cytology	Refrigerate	3 specimens required. Transport to lab on day of collection
	AFB	Refrigerate	3 specimens can be sent on 3 rd day
Swabs for <i>Bordetella pertussis</i>		Room Temperature	
Swabs/urine for Chlamydia and gonorrhoea		Room Temperature	
Swabs for virology		Refrigerate	Refrigerate prior to transport to lab
COVID swabs		Room Temperature	

TRANSPORTATION OF SPECIMENS

Courier Pickups

Labtests is supported by our own network of medical couriers. Our network is purpose-designed to deal with the specific demands of community pathology, such as the early morning 'rush' of samples that need to arrive at the lab as early as possible for optimum turnaround times.

Based on a 'hub and spoke' model, our medical couriers run samples from collection points to one of four regional hubs. From there, four dedicated shuttles ferry samples to the central Carbine Road laboratory, freeing up regional couriers for quicker local collections.

The network is managed by an advanced dispatch system, designed to speed up work-flows with real-time sending and receiving of sample pickup information. All of our medical couriers are equipped with hand-held data units that download job instructions 'live' as they come in through dispatch. These units also contain GPS tracking systems that allow the Labtests dispatch team to track couriers' movements, locate the nearest courier for urgent jobs, and constantly analyse and improve routes.

Please **contact us** on 574 7399 (Option 2) to book a courier pickup.

Requests for Urgent Courier Pick-ups

When requesting a courier pick up for an urgent specimen please be aware that the couriers will make every effort to pick up the samples as soon as possible. If results are required sooner than six hours (standard urgent turnaround time), it is important to advise this at the time of your call.

Labtests couriers operate to a three hour cycle and urgent requests may be picked up by regular cycle courier. Pick up/delivery to lab within three hours allows the lab three hours to analyse and report the tests.

Transporting Specimens on Ice (chilly wrap)

- Remove bubble wrap and absorbent pad from Bio bottle
- Wrap absorbent pad around specimen and place in bubble wrap
- Wrap Chilly Wrap (about 3 to 4 squares) around wrapped specimen
- Place wrapped specimen in Bio bottle
- Place Bio bottle into the box for transport.
- If other specimens are requested place those in biohazard bag together with the request form. Note on the form there is also a specimen on ice.