

Central Vermont Medical Center

Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

ANAEROBIC CULTURE SPECIMEN COLLECTION

Specimens unacceptable for anaerobic cultures:

- Throat and NP swabs
- Mouth
- Nose
- Stool or rectal specimens
- Vaginal and cervical swabs, prostatic secretions
- Gastric contents
- Urine, unless collected by suprapubic aspiration
- Surface material from decubitis ulcers, wounds and sinus tracts
- Sputum and bronchial aspirates
- Bronchial wash / BAL samples

These anatomic sites harbor anaerobic bacteria normally. Anaerobic culture of these specimens can be expected to yield numerous isolates of unknown clinical significance which may lead to results that are misleading to the clinician. When one of these specimens is received for anaerobic culture, the nurse or physician will be notified that the request will not be processed.

Specimen

1. The best specimen for anaerobic culture is obtained by using needle and syringe or tissue/ biopsy material.
2. Swab samples are not acceptable and will be rejected.

PROCEDURE FOR SYRINGE COLLECTION (Optimal specimen for anaerobic recovery)

1. Disinfect collection site with 70% alcohol prior to collection.
2. Aspirate sample into syringe, avoiding exposure of sample to oxygen.
3. Expel any aspirated air from syringe, remove needle and recap syringe. Small samples (<0.5 cc.) can be placed directly into thio broth.

4. Label syringe or broth must be clearly labeled with the patient's FIRST and LAST NAME, date of birth, date and time of collection and collectors initials OR identified via PPID
5. Transport to laboratory for processing immediately.
6. Do not refrigerate.

PROCEDURE FOR SPECIMEN HANDLING, OTHER SPECIMENS ANAEROBIC TRANSPORT VIAL

1. Obtain an anaerobic transport vial from the laboratory. One vial is required for each culture source. Anaerobic culture will include culture for aerobic organisms.
2. Remove the cap of the anaerobic transport vial and place fluid or tissue in container and close as quickly as possible. Each vial has a sterile pre-reduced gel buffer to maintain anaerobic conditions.
3. Do not refrigerate sample.
4. Specimens should aseptically collected to avoid inclusion of normal flora.
5. Specimen must be labeled with patient name (first and last), date of birth, site of collection and collection date and time or via PPID.

References

1. CLSI M56-A Principles and Procedures for the Detection of Anaerobes in Clinical Specimens; Approved Guideline; July 2014
2. Bailey & Scott's Diagnostic Microbiology, Thirteenth Edition, Copyright 2014, Patricia M. Tille.