

Collection and Packaging of Sputum Specimens



Kentucky Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Supplies Needed for Sputum Collection



Sputum Tube



Aluminum Can with Biohazard label

*Ensure rubber gasket is in lid



Outreach or Laboratory Form 207



Outer Can with Lid

When You First Get Up; Before You Eat Anything!



- 1) Make sure two identifiers are on the specimen label and name is correct on lab slip.
- 2) Fill out Outreach or lab form completely. Write the collection date on the Outreach form.

- 1) Remove cap, and be careful not to place your mouth on the rim of the sputum tube.
- 2) Take three good, deep breaths.
- 3) Cough deeply enough to bring up secretions (NOT saliva) from your chest.
- 4) Spit secretions into tube up to 5 ml. (1 tsp.).
- 5) Place the cap straight and tight on the sputum tube (Do not place in a crooked position).

Packaging and Shipping

- 1) Place sputum tube into inner aluminum can (with absorbent material in bottom of aluminum container).
- 2) Wrap the lab form around the outside of the inner aluminum container.
- 3) Place the inner aluminum container into the outer mailing container (be sure the address label is in place on the outside of the mailing container). The specimen must be mailed to the state laboratory or taken to the local health department on the day of collection. Sputum that cannot be mailed or taken to the health department on the day of collection must be refrigerated (NOT frozen).



When shipping via FedEx place containers inside UN3373 Pak

Refer to 49CFR 173.199 for current regulations on packaging and shipping of Category B infectious substances