

**U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY
IRWIN ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY
FORT RILEY, KS 66442**

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTION OF SPUTUM FOR CULTURE

In order to ensure proper handling of all sputum specimens, it is necessary to ensure the patient receives collection instructions.

Sputum is mucous secreted from the lungs. Disease causing bacteria from this mucous can be identified and proper treatment given. **NOTE: Sputum is not saliva or postnasal discharge from the mouth or throat.**

1. A first morning deep cough specimen is the specimen of choice.
2. If you wear dentures or partial plates, remove them prior to the sputum collection.
3. Rinse mouth and gargle with warm water.
4. When ready to collect specimen, bring the sputum up from the lungs, inhale and exhale deeply three times, then inhale swiftly, cough forcefully, and expectorate into the sputum container.
5. Cover the container immediately ensuring the lid is closed tightly.
6. Deliver the specimen to the IACH laboratory within one (1) hour. Ensure the specimen container is labeled with the patient's name, social security number, DOB, and date.
7. If you have any questions, please call the laboratory at (785) 239-7648. Laboratory hours are 0730 to 1700.

