

Collection and Transport of Urine for Culture and Urinalysis

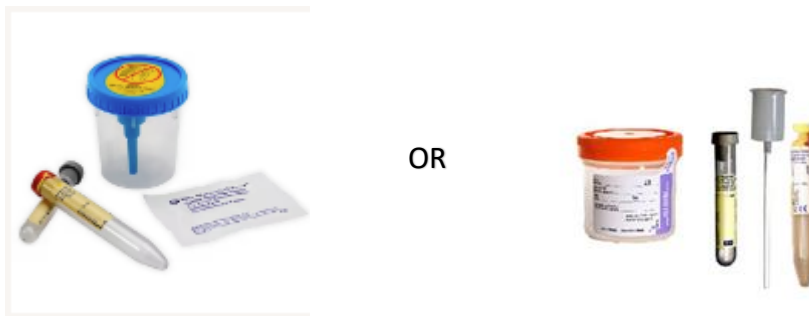
Date: August 21st, 2023

Quality assurance for urine specimens begins at the time of collection and is necessary to avoid contamination of specimens with normal flora of the skin, urethral opening and external genitalia. Female and male patients should be instructed in proper collection of midstream/voided specimens and provided with the necessary wipes to accomplish cleansing prior to urinating into sterile cups. If needed, our UR Medicine Test Index provides patient preparation instructions for collecting midstream specimens for Urine Culture (<https://www.testmenu.com/rochester/Tests/67858>).

Once collected, urine specimens should NOT be left at room temperature in original collection containers. It is important to note that urine is a good growth medium for normal flora introduced at the time of collection and that these organisms will grow at room temperature. Immediately after collection, practice staff should transfer urine specimens into gray top transport tubes for cultures and marble top tubes for urinalysis to prevent growth of normal flora introduced at the time of urine collection.

Placing urine in these transport tubes with preservative immediately after collection assures that the results of culture represent organisms in the bladder at the time of collection and not on skin or external genitalia. Urine specimens in preservative tubes are stable for culture for 48 hours and urinalysis for 72 hours at ambient temperature, whereas, urine in the original container without preservative is stable for only 1-2 hours. The following pictures show urine collection and transport materials provided in our Outreach Order Form for clients of our laboratory.

We urge practices to rigorously follow these recommendations in order to decrease the number of false-positive urine cultures, decrease unnecessary treatment and improve patient and provider expectations.



Please contact Dr. Dwight Hardy with any questions or concerns.

From: Dwight J. Hardy, Ph.D.
Director Clinical Microbiology, Serology/Immunology
UR Medicine Labs
Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
University of Rochester Medical Center
Phone: (585) 275-1408
Email: Dwight_Hardy@urmc.rochester.edu