



**Audit:**

Sections pertaining to Specimen Acceptability Criteria can be found in:

- Specimen Transport and Management Section
- Vertical Audit of SOP/Practice Section under Pre-test Specimen Handling.

**CAP Accreditation Checklist:**

Questions referring to Specimen Acceptability Criteria can be found in:

- Laboratory General Checklist– Specimen Collection, data handling, and reporting
- All Commons Checklist – Specimen Collection and Handling
- Microbiology Checklist- Specimen Collection and Handling.
- Urinalysis Checklist – Specimen Collection and Handling
- Hematology-Coagulation Checklist - Specimen Collection and Handling

**Background Information:**

The following tabs in this excel sheet give you an example of a Specimen Acceptability Criteria Table. The information included in the table was collected from the references listed below. Use your own method/instrument and reagent package inserts to confirm specimen criteria at your laboratory.

**References:**

[Quest Diagnostic web link to specimen guidelines- Specimen handling | Quest Diagnostics](#)

[Lab Corp Test Menu website - https://www.labcorp.com/wps/portal/provider/testmenu](https://www.labcorp.com/wps/portal/provider/testmenu)

Laboratory Test Handbook with disease index 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition - by David S. Jacobs, Dwight K Oxley, and Wayne R DeMott

Effects of Preanalytical Variable on Clinical Laboratory Test, Third Edition by Donal S. Young, MD. PhD.

CLSI- H21-A5 Collection, Transport, and Processing of Blood Specimens for Testing Plasma-Based Coagulation Assays and Molecular Hemostasis Assays: Approved Guideline, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

CLSI H21-A5 Quick Guide Collection, Handling, Transport, and Storage for Hemostasis

CLSI C49-ED2: 2018 Analysis of Body Fluids in Clinical Chemistry 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

CLSI GP16-A3 Urinalysis Approved Guideline, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

CLSI GP44-A4:Procedures for the Handling and Processing of Blood Specimens for Common Laboratory Test, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

## See Specimen Acceptability Criteria Guidelines for References

Test	Specimen	Container		Transport and storage requirements and collection notes	Rejection criteria
		Tube type	Anticoagulant	Note- Stability and storage can be dependent on instrument and test system used.	
<b>Hematology-Blood</b>					
CBC with or without differential	Whole blood	Purple top	EDTA (Check protocol for what type is required- dry or liquid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stable at room temperature 24 hours</li> <li>•Refrigerated at 2-8°C stable 48 hours</li> <li>•Never freeze</li> <li>•Do not expose to direct sunlight or heat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Short draw-less than half of maximum draw of the tube</li> <li>•Overfilled tubes</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> </ul>
CD4/CD8	Whole blood	Purple top	EDTA (Check protocol for what type is required- dry or liquid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stable at room temperature (15-30°) pending processing up until 24 hours. Never refrigerate prior to processing.</li> <li>•Do not expose to direct sunlight or heat.</li> <li>•Do not place samples next to ice packs.</li> <li>•Never freeze.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Short draw-less than half of maximum draw of the tube</li> <li>•Refrigerated tubes/iced tubes/frozen</li> <li>•Overfilled tubes</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> </ul>
ESR (sed rate)	Whole blood	Purple top	EDTA (Check protocol for what type is required- dry or liquid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stable up to 4 hours at room temperature, 24 hours at 2-8°C as long as rewarmed before testing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Short draw-less than half of maximum draw of the tube</li> <li>•Overfilled tubes</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> </ul>
<b>Coagulation</b>					

PT	Whole blood	Blue top	Sodium Citrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stable at room temperature up to 24 hours in stopper centrifuged or uncentrifuged tube.</li> <li>•If unable to perform testing within 24 hours platelet-free plasma should be removed and frozen at -20° for up to two weeks or - 70° up to 12 months.</li> <li>•Storage at refrigerated (2-8°C) temperatures is not recommended due to activations of specific factors.</li> <li>•Ice pack or ice water bath storage not recommended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Under filled or overfilled tubes (+/- 10% of tube draw is acceptable)</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>• Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> <li>•High Hematocrit</li> <li>•Grossly lipemic</li> </ul>
APTT Non-heparinized patient	Whole blood	Blue top	Sodium Citrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Nonheparinized blood stable uncentrifuged or centrifuged in unopened tube at room temperature up to four hours from collection.</li> <li>•Storage at refrigerated (2-8°C) temperatures is not recommended due to activations of specific factors.</li> <li>•If unable to perform testing within 4 hours platelet-free plasma should be removed and frozen at -20° for up to two weeks or - 70° for long term storage.</li> <li>•Ice pack or ice water bath storage not recommended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Under filled or overfilled tubes (+/- 10% of tube draw is acceptable)</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>• Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> <li>•High Hematocrit</li> <li>•Grossly lipemic</li> </ul>
APTT Heparinized patient	Whole blood	Blue top	Sodium Citrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Heparinized blood stable centrifuged within one hour of collection stored at room temperature and tested within four hours from collection.</li> <li>•If unable to perform testing within 4 hours platelet-free plasma should be removed and frozen at -20°C for up to two weeks or - 70°C up to 12 months.</li> <li>•Storage at refrigerated (2-8°C) temperatures is not recommended due to activations of specific factors.</li> <li>•Ice pack or ice water bath storage not recommended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Under filled or overfilled tubes (+/- 10% of tube draw is acceptable)</li> <li>•Clotted specimen</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen</li> <li>•Wrong anticoagulant</li> <li>• Mislabeled</li> <li>•Expired tubes</li> <li>•High Hematocrit</li> <li>•Grossly lipemic</li> </ul>

**Hematology-Body Fluid**

Cell count	Body Fluid	Purple top	EDTA	<p>3 ml preferably collected in purple top. Must be refrigerated if not tested within 2 hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specimen not useable for count if more than 4 hours old.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mislabeled</li> <li>Clotted</li> <li>Insufficient sample</li> <li>Leaky or contaminated</li> </ul>
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**Hematology-CSF**

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Cell count	CSF	CSF container or sterile container	None	1-3 ml CSF, must be tested within 1 hour of collection.	Mislabeled Clotted Insufficient sample Leaky or contaminated
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## See Specimen Acceptability Criteria Guidelines for References

Test	Specimen	Container		Transport and storage requirements and collection notes	Rejection criteria
		Tube type	Anticoagulant	Note- Stability and storage can be dependent on instrument and test system used.	
<b>Urinalysis</b>					
Urine hCG	Urine	Sterile container	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Patient should not urinate for at least one hour before collection.</li> <li>•If patient cannot urinate give patient water or juice to promote urination.</li> <li>•A first catch urine sample should be collected in a clean container without additives.</li> <li>•If other testing is to be performed on specimen, an aliquot should be placed in a clean test tube and remaining sample refrigerated for transport.</li> <li>•Testing should be performed immediately after collection but can be delayed up to 48 hours if specimen is refrigerated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Leaking containers</li> <li>•Bloody specimens</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Specimens with incorrect additive</li> </ul>
Chemistry Urine Dipstick	Urine	Sterile container	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Patient should not urinate for at least one hour before collection.</li> <li>•If patient cannot urinate give patient water or juice to promote urination.</li> <li>•A first catch urine sample should be collected in a clean container without additives.</li> <li>•If other testing is to be performed on specimen, an aliquot should be placed in a clean test tube and remaining sample refrigerated for transport.</li> <li>•Testing should be performed as soon as possible after collection - preferably within 2 hours.</li> <li>•If testing is delayed, specimen should be refrigerated up to 8 hours and brought back to room temperature before testing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Leaking containers</li> <li>•Bloody specimens</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Specimens with incorrect additive</li> </ul>

<p>Urine Microscopy</p>	<p>Urine</p>	<p>Sterile container</p>	<p>None</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Patient should not urinate for at least one hour before collection.</li> <li>•If patient cannot urinate give patient water or juice to promote urination.</li> <li>•A first catch urine sample should be collected in a clean container without additives.</li> <li>•If other testing to be performed on specimen, an aliquot should be placed in a clean test tube and remaining sample refrigerated for transport.</li> <li>•Testing should be performed as soon as possible after collection - preferably within 2 hours.</li> <li>•If testing is delayed, specimen should be refrigerated up to 8 hours and brought back to room temperature before testing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Leaking containers</li> <li>•Bloody specimens</li> <li>•Mislabeled</li> <li>•Specimens with incorrect additive</li> </ul>
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## See Specimen Acceptability Criteria Guidelines for References

Test	Specimen	Container		Transport and storage requirements and collection notes	Rejection criteria
		Tube type	Anticoagulant	Note- Stability and storage can be dependent on instrument and test system used.	
<b>Chemistry-Blood</b>					
Albumin	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
ALT(SGPT)	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Alkaline Phosphatase	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>

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Ammonia	Plasma	Green top	Lithium or Sodium Heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specimen must be transported on ice.</li> <li>•Must be collected, centrifuged, aliquoted and either frozen or run within 30 minutes of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens must be transported frozen on dry ice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Amylase	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
AST(SGOT)	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specimen very unstable must be kept chilled before running.</li> <li>•Results very sensitive to hemolysis.</li> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Hemolyzed specimens</li> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted spec</li> </ul>
Direct Bilirubin	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Bilirubin decomposes in daylight or fluorescent light - protect specimen from it. Tube can be wrapped in aluminum foil.</li> <li>•Centrifuge within 4 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Tubes should be closed to prevent evaporation.</li> <li>•If testing not performed within 4 hours from collection refrigerate sample.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>

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Total Bilirubin	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Bilirubin decomposes in daylight or fluorescent light - protect specimen from it. Tube can be wrapped in aluminum foil.</li><li>•Centrifuge within 4 hours of collection.</li><li>•Tubes should be closed to prevent evaporation.</li><li>•If testing not performed within 4 hours from collection refrigerate sample.</li><li>•Check reagent limitation of patient age-some reagents cannot be used on children less than 14 days old.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li><li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li><li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li><li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li><li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li><li>•Insufficient specimen.</li><li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li></ul>
Calcium	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li><li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li><li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2° - 8°C.</li><li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li><li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li><li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li><li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li><li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li><li>•Insufficient specimen.</li><li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li><li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li></ul>
Chloride	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li><li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li><li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2° - 8°C.</li><li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li><li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li><li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li><li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li><li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li><li>•Insufficient specimen.</li><li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li><li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li></ul>
Cholesterol	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li><li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li><li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2° - 8°C.</li><li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li><li>•Preferred specimen is fasting.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li><li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li><li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li><li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li><li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li><li>•Insufficient specimen.</li><li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li><li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li></ul>

CO2	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Testing should be run on a specimen that has remained unopened prior to testing in a vertical position.</li> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
CK	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Creatinine	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Prolonged storage at room temperature causes an increase in Creatinine due to non-specific formation of pseudocreatinine.</li> <li>•Centrifuge within 4 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Tubes should be closed to prevent evaporation.</li> <li>•Do not obtain specimens through catheters used to infuse hyperalimentation fluid.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
FSH	Serum/ plasma	Red-top or gel-barrier tube or mint-top gel tube	none/lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•If a red-top tube is used, transfer separated serum to a plastic transport tube.</li> <li>•Avoid hemolysis</li> <li>•Aliquots stable for 2-4 hours room temperature, 7 days refrigerated and 7 days frozen.</li> <li>•Stable for 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable</li> <li>•Red-top tube with serum not separated from cells within two hours of collection</li> <li>•Gross lipemia</li> <li>•Mislabelled or unlabeled tubes</li> </ul>

GGT	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Glucose	Serum or plasma	red, Tiger, green or Grey top	Sodium Fluoride, Lithium Heparin or None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fluoride tubes preferred - helps to prevent the breakdown of glucose to lactic acid during glycolysis.</li> <li>•Preferred specimen is fasting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> </ul>
Serum hCG	Serum	Tiger/SST	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
HDL Cholesterol	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Preferred specimen is fasting.</li> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>

Lactate	Plasma	Grey	Sodium Fluoride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw specimen without use of a tourniquet. If used, tourniquet should be removed for 1 minute prior to drawing blood. Place specimen on ICE and keep on ice until centrifuged. Mix well (gently inverting 3- 4 times). Separate plasma from cells within 30 minutes of collection. Freeze if testing not performed within 1 hour.</li> <li>• Fluoride tubes preferred - helps to prevent the breakdown of glucose to lactic acid during glycolysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>• Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>• Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>• Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>• Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>• Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>• Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>• Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
LDH	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>• Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>• Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>• After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>• Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>• Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>• Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>• Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>• Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>• Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>• Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
LDL Cholesterol	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fasting specimen preferred.</li> <li>• Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>• Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>• Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>• After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>• Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>• Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>• Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>• Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>• Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>• Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>• Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Lipase	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>• Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>• Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>• After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>• Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>• Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>• Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>• Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>• Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>• Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>• Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>

Magnesium	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Phosphorus	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
Potassium	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Tubes with EDTA or Fluoride Oxalate anticoagulant</li> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> </ul>
Sodium	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>•Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>•Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>•After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>•Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>•Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>•Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>•Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>•Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>•Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>•Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>

Triglycerides	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fasting specimen preferred.</li> <li>Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
BUN/Urea	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
TSH	Serum	Red-top or gel-barrier tube	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>If a red-top is used, transfer separated serum to a plastic transport tube within 2 hours.</li> <li>Stable at room temperature 2-4 hours</li> <li>Stable refrigerated separated 7 days</li> <li>Stable frozen separated 7 days.</li> <li>Stable for 3 freeze/thaw cycles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plasma specimen</li> <li>Grossly hemolyzed specimens</li> <li>Red-top tubes with serum not separated from cells within two hours of collection.</li> </ul>
Uric Acid	Serum or plasma	Red, Tiger or Green top	None or Lithium heparin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serum specimens need to be completely clotted prior to centrifugation.</li> <li>Centrifugation of whole blood for plasma or serum should be within 2 hours of collection.</li> <li>Specimens should be stable for 8 hours at room temperature and up to 48 hours at 2°- 8°C.</li> <li>After 48 hours specimens should be frozen at -20°C for one month or -70°C for longer storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broken or leaking tubes.</li> <li>Unlabeled tubes.</li> <li>Old specimen and/or expired tubes.</li> <li>Incorrect handling and transportation of specimen</li> <li>Incorrect tubes or anticoagulant.</li> <li>Insufficient specimen.</li> <li>Clotted specimen for plasma tubes.</li> <li>Hemolyzed specimen not acceptable.</li> </ul>
<b>Chemistry-CSF</b>					
Glucose	CSF	CSF container or sterile red top	None	<p>1 ml CSF, must be tested within 2 hrs of collection or refrigerated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specimen must be centrifuged before testing.</li> </ul>	<p>Mislabeled.</p> <p>Insufficient amount.</p> <p>Greater than 2 hours from collection unless refrigerated.</p>

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Protein	CSF	CSF container or sterile red top	None	1 ml CSF, must be tested within 2 hrs of collection or refrigerated. •Specimen must be centrifuged before testing.	Mislabeled. Insufficient amount. Greater than 2 hours from collection unless refrigerated.
<b>Chemistry-Body Fluid</b>					
Glucose	Body Fluid	Red top	None	1 ml Body Fluid, must be tested within 2 hrs of collection or refrigerated. •Specimen must be centrifuged before testing.	Mislabeled. Insufficient amount. Greater than 2 hours from collection unless refrigerated.
Protein	Body Fluid	Red top	None	1 ml Body Fluid, must be tested within 2 hrs of collection or refrigerated. •Specimen must be centrifuged before testing.	Mislabeled. Insufficient amount. Greater than 2 hours from collection unless refrigerated.

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## See Specimen Acceptability Criteria Guidelines for References

Test	Specimen	Container		Transport and storage requirements and collection notes Note- Stability and storage can be dependent on instrument and test system used.	Rejection criteria
		Tube type	Anticoagulant		
<b>Immunology</b>					
Rapid HIV (specimen requirements depends on kit used)	Serum/ Whole Blood/ Finger stick	Red/Blue/ Purple/ yellow	Depends on tube type used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> <li>•Whole blood good for 30 hours refrigerated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> <li>•Clotted whole blood samples.</li> <li>•Incorrect anticoagulant.</li> </ul>
Geenius HIV 1/2	venous or finger stick whole blood, serum or plasma	Purple/Red Green/Blue	EDTA, Heparin or Sodium citrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Do not freeze whole blood.</li> <li>•Venous whole blood specimens may be tested immediately or stored at 2-8 °C for up to 3 days following collection.</li> <li>•Be sure that the tube of serum or plasma is well mixed after collection and before testing.</li> <li>•For long-term storage, the serum and plasma specimens should be frozen at - 20° C or colder.</li> <li>•Samples should not be used if they have incurred more than 5 freeze-thaw cycles.</li> <li>•Mix samples thoroughly and gently after thawing, and bring to room temperature.</li> <li>•It is also recommended to centrifuge thawed specimens to remove gross particulate matter.</li> <li>•Serum and plasma samples may be stored at 2-8° C for up to 7 days and up to 48 hours at room temperature (18-30 °C).</li> <li>•If specimens are shipped, they should be packed in compliance with regulations covering the transportation of etiologic agents.</li> <li>•Serum and plasma specimens can be shipped at ambient conditions (18-30 °C) for up to 2 days or samples can be shipped refrigerated with cold packs or wet ice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Whole blood that has been frozen.</li> </ul>



HSV-2	Serum	Red	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly Hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic sapless.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>
Anti-HCV EIA	Serum	Red	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly Hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic sapless.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>
Hepatitis Testing	Serum	Red	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>
Anti-HIV EIA	Serum/Plasma	Red	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20°C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>
HIV Western Blot	Serum/plasma	Red/Blue/Purple/yellow	None/Na Citrate/EDTA/ACD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>•Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20°C.</li> <li>•Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>•Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>•Contaminated samples.</li> <li>•Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>

### See Specimen Acceptability Criteria Guidelines for References

Test	Specimen	Tube type/container	Transport and storage requirements and collection notes	Rejection criteria
			Note- Stability and storage can be dependent on instrument and test system used.	
<b>Microbiology</b>				
Mycobacteriology	Sputum	Sterile container	<p>Best to be collected in early morning from deep productive cough on 3 consecutive days.</p> <p>If specimen can not be transported to laboratory in 24 hours, specimen should be refrigerated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If sputum is induced indicate so it will not be mistaken for watery saliva.</li> <li>• If bronchoalveolar samples collected avoid tap water with the scope due to possible contamination with saprophytic mycobacteria.</li> <li>• No transport media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specimens collected greater than 24 hours unrefrigerated.</li> <li>• Pooled specimens.</li> <li>• Mislabelled specimen.</li> <li>• Swabs only.</li> </ul>
RPR	Serum (heated or unheated)/ Plasma	Red/Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>• Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20°C.</li> <li>• Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>• Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>• Contaminated samples.</li> <li>• Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> <li>• Icteric samples.</li> </ul>
TPHA	Serum/ plasma	Red/Purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separated serum/plasma should remain at room temperature no longer than 6 hours.</li> <li>• Can be stored at 2-8 C for 1 week or frozen at -20°C.</li> <li>• Do not freeze/thaw more than one cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grossly hemolyzed samples.</li> <li>• Hyperlipemic samples.</li> <li>• Contaminated samples.</li> <li>• Samples that have incurred more than 3 freeze/thaw cycles.</li> </ul>
GC/Chlamydia- Amplicor	Urine/Swab	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient should not have urinated for at least one hour prior to collection.</li> <li>• First void urine is preferred and not more than 20-30 ml.</li> <li>• Females should not clean area before collection.</li> <li>• Urine/Swab specimen should be transported at 2 -25°C</li> <li>• Store unprocessed urine at 2-8°C if testing is delayed more than 2 hours-good for 24 hours.</li> <li>• Specimens can be stored at -70°C for later retesting-refer to specific testing for retention time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bloody urine for PCR technique.</li> <li>• Contaminated samples</li> <li>• Leaking specimens</li> <li>• Containers with swabs left in the collection medium.</li> </ul>

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GC/Chlamydia	Urine/Swab	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Swabs should be transported at 2-27° within 4-6 days.</li><li>•Urine should be transported and stored at 15-27° for not more than 2 days or if refrigerated at 2-8°C within 4-6 days.</li><li>•Do not freeze samples.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Excessive mucous.</li><li>•Swabs left in medium container.</li><li>•Frozen urine specimens.</li></ul>
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