

# Collecting a Sputum Specimen

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# Specimen Collection Methods for Pulmonary TB Disease

There are four methods for the collection of sputum.

1. Spontaneous (most common)
2. Induced
3. Bronchoscopy
4. Gastric Aspiration

# Collection of a sputum specimen

- ◆ Mouth should be free of any foreign matter
- ◆ Sputum should be collected from deep in the chest.
- ◆ Hot shower, warm beverage, or steam will help to raise sputum from the chest for the collection of a spontaneous specimen

# Sputum Collection

- ◆ Take a deep breath and hold for 5 seconds
- ◆ Slowly breath out
- ◆ Take another deep breath and cough hard to bring up the sputum
- ◆ The specimen must be sputum, and not mucous from the nose or mouth



# Sputum Collection

At least three consecutive sputum specimens are needed.

Specimens must be at 8-12 hours apart with one of them being collected the first thing in the morning.

Specimens can be sent through the US Postal Service using MDCH specimen containers.

Based on the clients understanding it maybe recommended to collect the specimens 24 hours apart.



# Clearance from Isolation

- ◆ On TB treatment for 2 weeks
- ◆ Responding to treatment
- ◆ Symptoms are resolving
- ◆ 3 consecutive smear negative sputum



# Testing

- ◆ Label the container with the client's name and date of birth. The name on the container must match what is on the requisition form.
- ◆ Home collection: complete the form for the client, and instruct them to document the date the specimen was collected on the requisition form.
- ◆ If more than one specimen is collected in a day the date & time needs to be documented on the requisition form.

# Common Problems with Sputum Collection

- ◆ Name on the container, and lab requisition form do not match.
- ◆ Information is missing on the lab requisition form.  
Example: Date, and/or time of collection is not documented.

Specimen is rejected by the lab due to leakage.

- ◆ Improper packaging.
- ◆ The client is not coughing, and is unable to produce a sputum



# Sputum Collection

