

## **Sputum Specimen Collection**

### **PURPOSE OF TEST**

Your doctor has ordered a test which requires the collection of a sputum specimen. The specimen will be used for a culture or for cytology exam (study of cells). It is very important that you obtain material coughed from the lungs. Saliva is of no diagnostic value.

### **COLLECTION OF SPECIMEN**

1. Obtain the collection container from the lab. The lab will provide you with a plain sterile container for a culture or a container with a small amount of liquid preservative for cytology. If your doctor has ordered the study x3, the lab will provide you with three (3) containers.
2. Collect the specimen in the early morning as soon as you get up.
3. Rinse your mouth thoroughly with water.
4. Rapidly breathe in and out three (3) times in order to raise material from the lungs. Cough deeply to get the sputum up from your lungs. Spit into the container without adding saliva in the container.
5. If you have three (3) containers, collect specimen once per day for three (3) successive mornings.

### **LABELING THE SPECIMEN**

Print the patient's full name, DOB, date, and time specimen was collected on the container.

### **STORAGE OF SPECIMEN AND DELIVERY TO LAB**

Return the specimen to the laboratory within one (1) hour of collection. If the specimen cannot be delivered within one (1) hour, refrigerate the specimen. The specimen must be received within 24 hours.

**If you have any questions about these instructions, please call the Client Service department at (219) 989-3700 or (800) 937-5521.**

