

TriHealth Laboratories
TriHealth Test Directory
Specimen Collection Tips and Helpful Hints

Tips for Successful Specimen Collection

- Do not leave the tourniquet on the patient's arm for more than one minute at a time.
- Do not have the patient clench his/her fist while the blood is being drawn. This will reduce the possibility of analytical error.
- Draw tubes in the proper order to prevent contamination from anticoagulants.

1 Blood Culture Bottle	
2 Sodium Citrate	 Blue
3 Serum tube with or without clot activator or gel separator	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Red</p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Yellow</p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Speckled Red</p>
4 Heparin Tube	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Green Light Green</p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Green</p>
5 EDTA Tube	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Lavender Pink</p>

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- Check both arms, forearms, and hands for veins.
- Make plenty of room for yourself.

Use Butterfly Vacutainer Kit (Luer Adapter)

- For patients with small or damaged veins.
- When maneuverability is needed.
- When obtaining blood from hand or forearm.

If Vein Cannot Be Seen Or Palpated

- Use warm towel or cloth on arm to increase circulation.
- Do not hyperextend the arm; doing so leaves the skin too taut for feeling a vein.
- Ask patient to dangle arm to side (or off side of bed) to allow gravity to increase blood flow to arm.

If No Blood Enters Collection Tube

- Advance needle a bit more.
- Slowly pull back needle to center of vein if you suspect that you have gone through the vein. Blood will begin to flow when needle is repositioned.
- Do not reposition the needle.

If you are unable to obtain the required specimen after two attempts, ask another experienced professional to assist. This will prevent further damage to the vein and minimize stress to the patient