

## SPUTUM COLLECTION

### For Acid fast Culture and Stain:

- Submit specimen in the amber sputum collection system. This system is for the protection of health service personnel while handling specimens in which Mycobacterium tuberculosis is suspect.
- First morning specimen optimal.
- Specimen may need to be collected by respiratory therapy using nebulization.
- Wait at least ½ hour after eating before collecting the specimen.
- If possible, have patient rinse mouth with water and gargle prior to specimen collection.
- Minimum of 5 ml preferred for specimen processing and decontamination.
- Refrigerate specimen if not delivered to the laboratory promptly.

### For Routine culture and Gram Stain

- Wait at least ½ hour after eating before collecting the specimen.
- If possible, have the patient rinse mouth with water and gargle prior to specimen collection.
- Instruct the patient to expectorate sputum into a sterile container.
- Transport to the laboratory promptly. Refrigerate the specimen if there is to be any delay in transit.
- The Microbiology Laboratory will review specimen adequacy by performing a gram stain and evaluating the number of squamous epithelial cells present.

### **All samples must be dropped off:**

#### **Pavilion Laboratory**

**750 Wellington Ave entrance 22**

**Monday- Friday 7:00am-5:30pm**

**Saturday- 7:00am-12:00pm**

**St. Mary's Laboratory Services**

**(970)298-2071**