

## SPUTUM CYTOLOGY COLLECTION

## Materials:

- One Sputum Cytology Fixative Container
  - *Note: Do not pour out the fixative. Do not drink the fixative.*

The mucoid material which is expelled from the respiratory passages are called sputum, The technique of identifying the cells in sputum is called cytology. A specimen is obtained by coughing up sputum from deep in the lungs and placing it in a bottle containing fixative. This fixative preserves the cells until they can be prepared for microscopic evaluation. Cytological examination of sputum reveals a variety of cells in both normal, healthy individuals and in patients with lung disease. Many conditions may be identified by examining these cells, i.e., inflammation, pneumonia, viral or fungal infections, and allergic reactions vs. Lung cancer. A minimum of 2-3 tablespoons of deep lung sputum is required.

1. Place the collection container at your bedside. First thing in the morning, cough up sputum from deep in your lungs. Be careful not to swallow.
2. Clear the sputum from the back of your throat and pit into the liquid in the container
3. Replace the lid on the container securely and shake it vigorously.
4. Cough as many times as necessary to obtain 2-3 tablespoons of sputum. If necessary, keep the container at your bedside for a few days and each morning add another sputum sample. Be sure to replace the lid securely and shake the container vigorously after adding each sample.
5. If you have difficulty coughing, try breathing the vapor from a cool mist vaporizer for 15 minutes. Breathe deeply, but at your normal rate.
6. Avoid contaminating the sputum sample with saliva or sinus drainage.
7. After obtaining your sputum sample, replace lid securely and write your full name and date of birth on the label.
8. Complete the Cytopathology and Surgical Pathology Requisition for with all the of the information requested, even if you have submitted a sample in the past.
9. Place the sample container in the ziplock portion on the transport bag and seal. Return the container to the laboratory.

**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