

PREPARATION AND TRANSPORT INSTRUCTIONS

SOUTH TEXAS LABORATORY IS CLOSED SATURDAY, SUNDAY

PLEASE VERIFY LAB SHIPPING LOCATION WITH LAB TESTING LOCATION WHEN PREPARING PACKAGES FOR FED-EX OVERNIGHT DELIVERY. Specimens shipped to the wrong Laboratory may result in delays in testing or rejection of specimens. Do Not Send STL samples to Austin or vice versa.

FOR OPTIMAL SPECIMEN INTEGRITY, USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES TO PREPARE YOUR SAMPLES FOR SHIPMENT:

1. All Serum tubes need to clot for a minimum of 10 minutes before centrifugation. If testing Comprehensive (CMP) (includes Glucose/Potassium), should centrifuge within 2 hours of collection.
2. For best separation of serum from cells, *all non-gel* blood collection tubes should be centrifuged at ≤ 1300 RCF for 10 minutes. NOTE: To determine RPM's, consult your centrifuge manual.
3. The BD Vacutainer®SST™ *gel tubes* should be centrifuged at ≤ 1300 RCF for 10 minutes in a swinging bucket centrifuge and 15 minutes in a fixed angle centrifuge. NOTE: To determine RPM's, consult your centrifuge manual.
4. The Chemistry tube or a throwaway tube must be drawn before the purple top EDTA tube for CBC.
5. The CBC tube must be gently inverted 10-12 time *immediately* after collection.
6. Use of a butterfly needle may cause fibrin clotting in CBC.

Protect samples from DIRECT CONTACT with ice packs (i.e., paper towels, etc). Samples should not be in direct contact with cold pack, may cause some analytes to be erroneous if gel barrier in Chemistry tube dislodges or CBC hemolysis due to contact with cold pack.

A. TRANSPORT PREPARATION: SERUM CHEMISTRIES

1. Instructions for Preparation of Samples with (a) and without (b) Glucose/Potassiums:

- a. Serum for Chemistries: with Glucose and/or Potassium: i.e. Comprehensive Panel (CMP), Basic Metabolic Panel (BMP), Glucose, or Potassium. Separate cells from serum by centrifugation within 2 hours of collection. GLUCOSE will not be valid after two hours on the cells! Separate serum into vial for transport. Leaving in collection container (separator tube) during transportation may cause contamination with cells if barrier becomes dislodged during transport. This may cause the sample to be rejected. Be sure the sample is centrifuged long enough to separate red cells from serum completely!
- b. Serum for Chemistries: without Glucose and/or Potassium: i.e. Hepatic Panel-LFT's, TB Panel. Separate cells from serum by centrifugation as soon as possible. (Preferably 2-6 hours Maximum). Be sure the sample is centrifuged long enough to separate red cells from serum completely. You can leave the sample in the collection/barrier tube. If the barrier becomes dislodged during transport the sample may be rejected.

B. PACKING INSTRUCTIONS: SERUM CHEMISTRIES

PLEASE INCLUDE A MANIFEST (PACKING SLIP) LISTING ALL SAMPLES AND TESTS REQUESTED.

Please keep a copy of the manifest and the tracking number for your records.

1. Serum for Chemistries

- a. To transport to laboratory preferably refrigerate or freeze serum depending on travel time to Laboratory. If the sample will reach lab in 24 hours pack in container with cold packs and separate samples in plastic biohazard bags. If sample will reach lab in 48 hours (freeze separated samples) and transport with cold packs as above (minimum of 2 packs) separated in plastic biohazard bags. (If shipping will be more than 48 hours-please ship with dry ice.)
- b. STL will be closed on Saturday/Sunday and most major holidays. If you collect serum samples on late Thursday and on Friday we suggest that they be centrifuged and the serum be separated into a transfer vial and frozen at -20°C. Then ship the samples on Monday overnight with frozen cold packs.

C. Whole blood for CBC's, HA1c's:

1. The samples for CBC's MUST be refrigerated if not packed for shipment within 4 hours. **Please refer to the *Instructions for Packing Blood Tubes for Shipment.*** They can be shipped in the same container as the serums for Chemistry. These will be kept cool but not frozen.
 - a. CBC with differential is good for 48 hours
 - b. CBC w/out differential is good for 48 hours
2. Whole Blood for Hemoglobin A1c's can be kept in the refrigerator after collection and shipped with the serum chemistries along with the cool packs. They are good for up to 5 days at refrigerator temperatures.

DO NOT SHIP WHOLE BLOODS WITH DRY ICE. They will hemolyze and be unacceptable for analysis.

These guidelines are for delivering your samples to us with minimal loss to your turn-around times and quality of results. Please contact us with any concerns or questions at 1-956-364-8752, or 8751.