



Sputum M/C/S, AFB or cytology

1. Sputum is a secretion from the lungs. It is not saliva or secretion from the nose. It is therefore essential that the specimen submitted is coughed up from the lungs and not from the mouth or throat.
2. Three specimens collected on consecutive mornings may be required, depending on the tests to be performed. You should be advised on this by your doctor or staff at the collection centre.
3. The specimen should be collected in the morning immediately after rising, since the overnight accumulation of secretions produces the most satisfactory material.
4. Before collecting the specimen, rinse your mouth thoroughly with water.
5. To collect the specimen, cough deeply from your chest and expel this material directly into the container provided. Remember it is important that the specimen comes from the lungs – cough deeply. If the specimen is found to be unsatisfactory in the laboratory, your doctor may request a repeat collection.
6. Ensure the container is labelled with your surname, first name, date of birth, sex, time and date of collection.
7. Specimen should preferably be refrigerated after collection and returned to the collection centre or doctor's surgery as soon as possible.