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**how to store**



**Samples from Primary Care:**

Ideally all samples should reach the lab promptly and ideal timings do depend on each test.

The laboratory is accessible 24/7 please use routine transport but additional drops can be made directly to the lab.

For urgent or non-routine samples please contact the appropriate laboratory.

The person asking for the test is responsible for following it up in a timely fashion.

Please double check all samples and forms are appropriately labelled with all details completed.

**Blood Sciences**

Common tests which CANNOT be left overnight include Potassium, FBC, AP, APPT, ESR, B12/Folate, NT-pBNP, ALT, AST, LDH, Phosphate and PTH. Coag samples ideally should be spun and separated and frozen within 4 hours of collection (max 24 hrs).

It is bad for most tests not to be received the same day as any sample deterioration with time will cause increasing interference. It is also bad for turnaround time.

**Microbiology**

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| Sample type | Storage requirements |
| Urines, swabs, faeces, sputum, TB | Overnight at 4oC (vaginal swabs – room temperature) |
| Chlamydia – in multicollect transport tube | 2-30oC for up to 14 days |
| Semen samples for infertility – use collection kits which includes instructions.Semen samples for post - vasectomy | By appointment only: received within 1 hour of collection between 8.30-11.30am.Must be received in lab within 1 hour of collection |
| Microbiology and Virology Bloods | Overnight only at 4oC |

**Cytology - Serous Fluids**

Any samples such as sputum, pus, cyst fluid or discharges for **non-gynae** cytology examination should be put into a plain universal bottle. If delayed getting to the lab, keep at 4°C.

**Histology**

Following fixation in 10% neutral buffered formalin, histology specimens can be stored indefinitely although prolonged fixation may hamper further investigations. Fixed specimens do not require refrigeration.

If 10% neutral buffered formalin is not available the specimen may be placed in normal saline and stored in a fridge until transport is available, if saline is not available the specimen can be stored dry in the fridge. If the specimen is placed in saline this should be stated clearly on the request form.

Any delay in formalin fixation will cause deterioration of the specimen so transport at the earliest opportunity is vital.

**Sampless**