Specimen Collection - Body Fluids

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<th>Applicability: Organizational</th>
<th>Date Effective: 12/1990</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department: Laboratory Services</td>
<td>Date Last Reviewed: 05/2019</td>
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<td>Supersedes: N/A</td>
<td>Date Last Revision: 05/2019</td>
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<td>Administration Approval: Joel Benware – Chief Information, Innovation, &amp; Compliance Officer</td>
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Purpose: To identify the proper collection of CSF, synovial, and pleural fluids for analysis.

Policy Statement: Fluid specimens are labile must be properly collected and promptly submitted to the Laboratory. Improper collection and/or delays in submitting can adversely affect results.

*** NOTE *** It is inherently unsafe to send a syringe NEEDLE to the lab (even if it is capped).

Samples submitted with NEEDLES attached will automatically be rejected and will not be accepted by the Laboratory.

Background: N/A

Definitions: N/A

Procedure:

SPINAL FLUIDS

The specimen is collected by lumbar puncture and should be placed in 3-4 sterile spinal fluid tubes. These tubes should be kept at room temperature and delivered to the Laboratory ASAP.

TUBE GUIDELINES

TUBE #1 SEND OUT OR ADDITIONAL TESTING (Extra cell count if requested)
TUBE #2 CSF PROTEIN, GLUCOSE
TUBE #3 GRAM SMEAR AND CULTURE
TUBE #4 CELL COUNT AND DIFFERENTIAL (IF NEEDED)

The physician may request an additional cell count and/or alter the test scheduled. If an alteration has occurred, please clearly indicate on the requisition the tube number and testing ordered. Laboratory staff will document the change via comments accompanying the lab results.
SYNOVIAL FLUIDS

The specimen is usually collected in a large syringe and should be placed in the following:

1. One (1) Plain RED TOP (without additive) tube for gross examination and most chemistry tests
2. One (1) LAVENDER TOP (EDTA) tube for cell count differential and crystal exam.
3. Place a minimum of 1ml into an anaerobic transport tube if a routine and/or anaerobic culture is ordered.

PLEURAL and THORACENTISIS FLUIDS

The specimen source is required and the fluid should be placed into the following:

1. One (1) Plain RED TOP (without additive) tube for gross examination and most chemistry tests
2. One (1) LAVENDER TOP (EDTA) tube for cell count differential and crystal exam.
3. (1-2 ml) of fluid into an Anaerobic transport tube if a routine and/or anaerobic culture is ordered.

Please submit any remaining fluid to the Laboratory if cytology testing is required.

Note Well: Since body fluid samples are generally considered irretrievable, cell counts and chemistries performed on CLOTTED body fluid will include a disclaimer noting that results may not be reliable and the clinician should interpret the results with caution.

Only body fluids intended for diagnostic testing may be submitted to the Laboratory, and MUST have ACCOMPANYING ORDERS FOR TESTING. Body fluids intended for therapeutic removal should NOT be sent to the Laboratory unless there are accompanying orders for laboratory testing. Up to one liter of fluid may be submitted (one large bottle). Excess fluid should not be submitted to the Laboratory.
Monitoring Plan: N/A

Related Policies: N/A

References: N/A

Reviewers:
- **A. Key Stakeholders:** Medical Director, Pathology and Laboratory Chief Nursing Officer
- **B. Committees:** N/A
- **C. Key Process Owner (KPO):** Director, Laboratory Services

*Not part of policy:* Body Fluid Analysis, CSF Count, Synovial Fluid, Pleural Fluid, Cell Count