

Blood Smear Preparation

Properly prepared blood smears are essential to accurately assess the patient's status. Blood smears can be made from the blood remaining in the needle by pushing a small drop of blood onto the slide with the last evacuated tube. Alternately, EDTA anticoagulated blood may be used if the smear is made within one hour of collection.

1. Put a small drop of blood on one end of glass slide.
2. Draw spreader slide toward drop at a 30 degree angle until it touches the drop of blood. The blood will spread behind the spreader slide by capillary action and should be allowed to spread the full width of the spreader slide.
3. Push the spreader slide smoothly and quickly down the slide producing a feathered edge.
4. Allow the smear to air dry. With a lead pencil, label the slides with the patient's full name on the thick end of smear (opposite the feathered edge).

