

## AFB Specimen Collection Table

**Preferred acceptable specimens:** Tissue, pus, drainage, or wound aspirates submitted in sterile containers.

Specimen	Preferred Volume	Unacceptable Conditions	Collection Container	Collection Procedures	Total Stability/Transport	Acid-Fast Stain
Sputum (expectorated or induced)	5-10 mL	<1 mL Frozen Swab Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container	Early morning preferred 8-24hr intervals, collect 3 consecutive specimens	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Performed
Lower Respiratory Tract (e.g., bronchoalveolar lavage, bronchial washes, bronchial brush)	5-10 mL	<1 mL Frozen Swab Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container	Surgical	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Performed
Gastric Aspirate/Lavage	5-10 mL	<1 mL Frozen Eswab Specimen that has not been neutralized	Sterile, leak-proof container	Collect early morning before patient's first meal and while still in bed for 3 consecutive days	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag Neutralize (pH7) specimen within 4 hours of collection with 100 mg of sodium carbonate	Performed
Upper Respiratory (e.g., sinus, ear, eye)	Visible material	<1 mL Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container *Eswab		Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Performed
CSF	5 mL	<1 mL Frozen Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container	Aseptically collected	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed if volume is <5 mL
Body Fluids (e.g., pericardial, pleural, peritoneal, etc.)	5 mL	<1 mL Frozen Swab Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container	Surgical	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed if volume is <1 mL

## AFB Specimen Collection Table

Specimen	Preferred Volume	Unacceptable Conditions	Collection Container	Collection Procedures	Total Stability/Transport	Acid-Fast Stain
Synovial Fluid	5 mL	<1 ml Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container *Eswab	Surgical	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed if volume is <1 mL
Fresh Tissue/Lymph Node	1-2 g	Dry swab Fixed in formalin or other preservative Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container with tissue submerged in sterile non-bacteriostatic saline. *Eswab	Aseptically collected during surgical or cutaneous biopsy procedures	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed on visible tissue too small to be ground
Bone	1-2 g	Dry swab Fixed in formalin or other preservative Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container with tissue submerged in sterile non-bacteriostatic saline. *Eswab	Aseptically collected during surgical or cutaneous biopsy procedures	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed
Blood	1-5 mL	<0.5 mL Aerobic and/or anaerobic blood bottles EDTA, ACD, and sodium citrate blue top tube Frozen	Bactec Myco/F Lytic bottle		Ambient: 3 days Refrigerated: 3 days Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed
Bone Marrow	1-3 mL	N/A	Sterile, leak-proof container	Surgical	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed
Eye/Corneal Scrapings	Visible material	<1 mL Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container Specimen on AFB culture media *Eswab		Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed

## AFB Specimen Collection Table

Specimen	Preferred Volume	Unacceptable Conditions	Collection Container	Collection Procedures	Total Stability/Transport	Acid-Fast Stain
Wound/Abscess Fluid	Visible material	<1 mL Frozen	Sterile, leak-proof container *Eswab	Biopsy of advancing margin of a wound is the preferred specimen	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Performed
Urine	40 mL	<10 mL Frozen Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container	First morning specimen Midstream 3 consecutive days	Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed if volume is <40 mL
Stool	1-3 g	Frozen Eswab	Sterile, leak-proof container		Ambient: 24 hours Refrigerated: 1 week Individually sealed transport bag	Not performed

\*Eswabs are considered suboptimal and may have reduced sensitivity for AFB diagnosis.

- Swabs are not recommended for the isolation of mycobacteria, since they provide limited material and the hydrophobicity of the mycobacterial cell envelop often compromises a transfer from the swabs onto solid media or into broth media.
- Please submit an Eswab specimen only when tissue biopsy or fluid aspiration is not feasible for specimens collected surgically.
- Eswabs are not acceptable for respiratory fluid specimens (e.g., sputum) and body fluids due to low yield leading to unreliable, false-negative results.

### Unacceptable Conditions:

- Insufficient specimen volume
- Specimen submitted frozen
- Hardware/catheter tips
- Tissue in formalin or fixatives
- Specimens in anaerobic transport media are unacceptable. Transfer at least 1 ml of the aspirated material into a sterile container.

**Note:** Specimen source is required for specimen to be processed.