

# SPECIMEN PREPARATION & STORAGE

## GUIDELINES FOR SPECIMEN PREPARATION AND STORAGE FOR COURIER PICK UP

### Introduction

Laboratory specimens must be stored and transported at proper temperatures in order to preserve the viability and integrity of the specimen. The following outline instructions for the preparation and transportation of specimens when the specimens are picked up at the clinic by contracted courier services and delivered directly to Ascend Clinical. A Courier Shipping Log is required to track specimen preparation and pick up. This procedure does not cover the requirements for packing, labeling, and documenting of biological materials for commercial carriers (e.g., UPS, Fed-Ex)

### Procedure

#### Specimen Transport Temperature Requirements

- Consult the Ascend Clinical Specimen Handling Posters for determining the proper transport temperature of each specimen.

#### Refrigerated

- After collection and processing, place specimen(s) in a biohazard specimen bag
- Mark biohazard specimen bag as Refrigerated and note your clinic acronym (Example A)
- Store sample in a refrigerator that is 35-46°F (2-8°C) leave in the refrigerator until the courier arrives to take delivery of the specimen or until it is time to place specimen(s) in the lockbox
- If refrigerated specimens must be placed in the lockbox, place cool pack on bottom of lockbox, followed by the sealed refrigerated biohazard bag(s) followed a second cool pack on top

#### Room Temperature

- After collection, place specimen(s) in a biohazard specimen bag
- Mark biohazard specimen bag as Room Temperature and note your clinic acronym (Example B)
- Store sample on a counter or shelf where the temperature is 68-77°F (20-25°C) until the courier arrives to take delivery of the specimen(s) or until it is time to place specimen(s) in the lockbox
- If the Room Temp specimen(s) must be placed in the lockbox, place room temperature biohazard bag(s) in the bottom of the lockbox
- If there are refrigerated samples in the lockbox, place room temp biohazard bag(s) to the side of the refrigerated specimens, not in direct contact with the cool packs

#### Shipping Log Requirements

- Clinic staff will record number of refrigerated and room temperature biohazard specimen bags to be picked up by courier
- Clinic staff will complete log even if there are no specimens to be picked up; Clinic staff will note "0" in respective columns
- When courier arrives to pick up specimens, the courier will report to charge nurse or designee to complete the shipping log and pick up specimens
- The charge nurse or designee will verify number of specimen bags picked up by courier
- Courier will complete log even if there are no specimens to be picked up; Courier will note "0" in respective columns
- If the specimens must be placed in the lockbox, the completed courier shipping log will be placed inside the lock box clearly visible on the top to be completed by courier
- If the specimens were placed in the lockbox, Clinic staff will retrieve courier shipping log in the morning to verify pick up

### Courier Responsibilities

- Courier will report to charge nurse or designee to complete the shipping log and pick up specimens
- Courier will record number of refrigerated and room temperature biohazard specimen bags to be picked up
- Courier will complete log even if there are no specimens to be picked up; Courier will note "0" in respective columns
- Courier will alert clinic staff if specimen bags do not indicate Refrigerated or Room Temperature
- If the specimens are picked up in the lockbox, Courier will note number of biohazard specimen bags as "Unmarked"
- Courier will check lockbox even if pick up occurs during clinic hours

### Ascend Clinical Responsibilities

- Provide clinic a Courier Shipping Log
- Verify clinic has lockbox if specimens are to be picked up after clinic operating hours
- Provide training to clinic staff on guidelines for specimen preparation and storage for courier pick up and Courier Shipping Log requirements
- Track and communicate packaging errors
- Provide additional web training as requested by clinic



**Example A**

Refrigerated  
Specimen Transport Bag



**Example B**

Room Temperature  
Specimen Transport Bag

