The Children’s Hospital  
Collection, Labeling and Transport of Microbiology Specimens  
General Instructions

1. Microbiology Specimen Requisition Form or EPIC printout must accompany each specimen. The following information must be provided:  
   - Patient’s last name, first name, medical record number  
   - Specimen source  
   - Procedure requested and/or special organisms sought.  
   - Date, time of collection and initials of person collecting specimen, with contact information for reporting of results.

2. Specimen Labeling and Identification  
Specimen containers must be clearly labeled with the patient’s medical record number, the source of specimen; the date and time specimen was obtained; and initials of person who obtained it. Specimens from facilities outside Children’s Hospital Colorado must include this information except the medical record number. Date of birth or facility accession number is acceptable alternatives.

3. General collection Instructions – The Children’s Hospital Colorado Outpatient Laboratory is available to collect blood, throat cultures, nasal swabs for MRSA, and bagged urine specimens. Supplies are available in the Outpatient Lab for patient collection of stools and clean catch urine specimens.

Bacterial Culture/Aerobic Using CultureSwab  
- Peel open package 1/3 length. Remove CultureSwab from package.  
- Remove cap/swab from tube.  
- Take sample and return cap/swab to tube.  
- Return swab to package.  
- Label tube and send to laboratory promptly.

Bacterial Culture/Anaerobic culture using Anaerobic Specimen collection kit  
- Follow instructions on Anaerobic Specimen Collector.  
- Collect specimen on swab.  
- Replace swab and push down gently on plastic plunger forcing inner glass tube into outer glass tube. Depress plunger away from bed site. Plunger should be flush with rubber surface.  
- Do not use for liquid or tissue.  
- Transport to laboratory promptly.

4. Transport  
- Transport all specimens to the laboratory in screw capped vials, tightened securely. When syringes are transported, needles must be removed and replaced with syringe caps. Specimens with external spillage are subject to rejection by the laboratory.  
- Specimens for virology should be refrigerated within 1 hour of collection and delivered promptly to the lab, ideally within 2 hours of collection but at least within 24 hours. If transport of virology specimens is delayed >3 days, freeze all specimens, except blood, at – 70°C and send on dry ice. Blood specimens for viral testing should be sent at room temperature or be recollected if they cannot be transported to the lab within 24 hours.  
- If transport of bacterial stool cultures and stool specimens for Ova and Parasite Detection will be delayed, call the Microbiology laboratory at x6703 for special transport medium.