POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON SPECIMEN COLLECTION FOR THE ADULT

Policy Statement

1. Specimens are collected upon the order of the physician according to hospital procedure by qualified nursing personnel. Label the container in the presence of the patient. Label must include the following information:
   a. Patient’s full name
   b. Hospital number for inpatients
   c. Hospital number or date of birth for outpatients
   d. Date and time specimen was obtained
   e. Initials of collector
   f. Source of specimen when appropriate

Clean-catch Midstream Voided Specimen

All urine specimens are collected as clean-catch midstream specimens unless the patient has an indwelling catheter.

Equipment

1. Clean-catch kit

Male Patient

1. Instruct the patient to expose glans and cleanse area around meatus. Wash area with a mild antiseptic solution.
2. Allow the initial urinary flow to escape.
3. Collect the midstream urine specimen in a sterile container.
4. Avoid collecting the last few drops of urine.
5. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above.
6. Send the specimen to the lab immediately with the appropriate lab requisition according to lab procedure.

Female Patient

1. Ask the patient to separate her labia to expose the urethral orifice.
2. Cleanse the area around the urinary meatus with cotton sponges liberally soaked with antiseptic solution.
3. While the patient keeps her labia separated, instruct her to void forcibly.
4. Allow initial urinary flow to drain into bedpan or commode and then catch the midstream specimen in a sterile container.
5. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above.
6. Send the specimen to the lab immediately with appropriate requisition according to lab procedure.
Stool Specimen

Equipment

1. Occult blood slide
2. Tongue blade

Suggested Action

1. Obtain stool specimen from the patient. All specimen containers shall be labeled by the collector in the presence of the patient. Labels must include the following information:
   a. Patient’s full name
   b. Hospital number for inpatients
   c. Hospital number or date of birth for outpatients
   d. Date and time specimen was obtained
   e. Initials of collector
   f. Source of specimen when appropriate
2. Unlabeled or improperly labeled specimens shall not be accepted.
3. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above.
4. Place small amount of stool on cardboard slide and take to lab with an appropriate requisition according to lab procedure.
5. If specimens are to be checked for blood, different specimens may be sent on the same day.

Stool Cultures

Equipment

1. Specimen cup
2. Tongue blade

Suggested Action

1. Obtain stool specimen from the patient.
2. Place small amount of stool in sterile container.
3. If specimens are to be checked for ova and parasites, different specimens should be sent on separate days. It is necessary to collect specimens for O & P before a patient receives barium. Patients receiving antibiotics, especially tetracycline or sulfa should wait 14 days before collection of stool specimens for O&P.
4. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above and take warm stool specimen to the lab immediately with appropriate requisition.

Throat Culture

Equipment

1. Culture swab and container
2. Light source
3. Tongue blade
Suggested Action

1. Remove swab from container, maintaining sterility.
2. Have patient open mouth, use tongue blade to depress the tongue to visualize back of throat.
3. Swab throat and tonsilar area gently. Avoid touching tongue with the swab.
4. Place swab in tube. Press preservative onto culture tip.
5. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above and take to the lab immediately with the appropriate requisition according to lab procedure.

Nose Culture

1. Calcium alginate swab and culturette container.

Suggested Action

1. Remove calcium alginate (Calgiswab) swab from the container maintaining sterility.
2. Gently insert swab into the nostril and slide along the midline septum until the posterior pharyngeal wall is met. Do not force the swab. With a twirling motion, obtain specimen.
3. Place the swab in the culturette. Break the glass capsule containing the transport media and make sure the tip of the swab is moistened with the transport media.
4. Label specimen correctly and take immediately to the lab with appropriate requisition according to lab procedure.

Cultures Obtained from Nasopharynx or Urethra

All cultures obtained from the nasopharynx or urethra must be collected on Calcium Alginate swabs. These are available as "Calgiswabs" from Lab. These swabs do not include a transport medium, so they must be clipped and inserted into a culturette tube for transportation to the laboratory.

- Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above.

Specimens collected on other types of "utensils" from these areas will be rejected as "unacceptable" by the laboratory. This is because the physical and chemical compositions of other sterile swabs greatly reduce sensitivity of culture in these areas, and can be very uncomfortable for the patient.

NOTE: Cultures of suspected herpetic lesions should not be obtained on Calgiswabs. Rayon tipped culturettes should be used for this purpose.

Sputum Collection

Equipment

1. Specimen container
2. Culture swab and container (Optional)
3. DeLee mucous Trap (Optional)
Suggested Action

1. Ask patient to expectorate a sputum specimen as early in the morning as possible. Explain to the patient that you need the thick slimy material he is coughing up and not the saliva or “spit”.
2. If specimen for culture is needed, place in a sterile container.
3. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above and take promptly to the Lab with the appropriate requisition according to the Lab procedure.
4. Upon physician order sputum may be obtained with DeLee mucous trap.
5. If unable to obtain sputum specimen within 2 hours, get a physician's order for induction by Respiratory Therapy.

Wound Culture

A wound culture may be done by qualified nursing personnel according to hospital procedure without a physician's order.

Equipment

1. Culture and swab container

Suggested Action

1. Expose the area to be cultured, taking care not to wipe away excess drainage.
2. Remove swab from container, maintaining sterility.
3. Gently insert swab into wound cavity, and with twirling motion obtain specimen.
4. Place swab in tube, press preservative into culture tip.
5. Label the specimen correctly as outlined in the Policy Statement above and take immediately to the lab with appropriate requisition according to lab procedure.

Documentation

On Doctors Order Sheet:

1. Write order for wound culture indicating site of the culture.
2. Flag Doctors Order Sheet to notify physician that his signature is required.

In Patient Notes Record:

1. Time specimen obtained
2. Type of specimen
3. Deposition of specimen

Approved By:
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