

 <p>OSPEDALE SAN RAFFAELE</p>	<p><b>Servizio di Medicina di Laboratorio</b></p>	<p><b>AMBULATORI PRELIEVI ESTERNI</b></p> <p>Mod19E-rev5 del 10/10/2014 Inglese</p>
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## **MYCOBACTERIUM SPUTUM** (container with no fixative))

Sputum is the thick mucus or phlegm that is coughed up from the lower respiratory tract (bronchi and lungs); it is not saliva or spit. Care must be taken in the sample collection process to ensure that the sample is from the lower airways and not the upper respiratory tract. If a sample is mostly saliva, the **microorganisms** grown in **culture** will not necessarily be those causing the infection. Furthermore, the presence of saliva and bacteria from the mouth in a sputum sample make it more difficult to identify disease-causing bacteria in the lungs, then the sample is not adequate for culture and a re-collection of the sample may be required.

**Sputum samples may be 'expectorated' or induced. Expectorated samples are coughed up and put into a cup provided by the laboratory. The person's mouth should be rinsed with water or a salt solution before to sample collection.**

Deep coughing is generally required, and the person should be informed that it is phlegm/mucus from the lungs that is necessary, not saliva. If someone cannot produce a sputum sample, then it can often be induced by inhaling a sterile saline or glycerin aerosol for several minutes to loosen phlegm in the lungs. **All samples collected should be taken to the laboratory promptly for processing while they are fresh. Sputum samples must be checked by the laboratory before testing. Successful sputum culture needs good sample collection. A sample that is not "adequate" must be rejected and a further sample collected.**

Return specimen as soon as possible (preferably within half an hour of collection) within the opening time of the lab. If there is a delay, specimen should be refrigerated (not more than 24 hours). Please label the specimen container with patient's name, date and time.

If requested 3 samples, collect a sample on three (3) separate mornings following the exact instructions referred to above. It is preferred that each specimen be dropped off at the lab each day. **Be sure to identify as I, II, III the containers.**

**The test can be done only Monday to Friday, not on Saturday.**

La Direzione del  
Servizio di Medicina di Laboratorio  
Ospedale San Raffaele