

I. Purpose:

All laboratory blood, body fluids and tissue specimens are to be transported in a sealed secondary container. This is to reduce associate and patient exposure to potentially infectious blood and body fluids and to ensure hospital compliance with CDC and OSHA guidelines for specimen transportation.

II. Materials Equipment & Transport Mechanisms:

1. Plastic biohazard bags with outside pocket
2. Plastic bucket or container with lid
3. Pneumatic tube system
4. Hand delivered/Manual
5. Plastic carrier (Red, Orange, and Clear)
6. Plastic bubble wrap
7. Foam carrier liners
8. Ice
9. Dry ice

III. Procedure:**A. Hand Delivered Specimens**

1. Prepare the specimen appropriately.
2. Insert the specimen into the biohazard bag and seal closed.
3. If a requisition is accompanying the specimen, insert the laboratory requisition into the outside pocket. The specimen and requisition should not be placed together because the requisition is not considered biohazardous.
4. When computerized labels are used to label specimens, insert specimen into biohazard bag and seal it closed. Extra labels can be placed into the outside pocket.
5. Odd sized or large specimens should be placed in a jumbo zip lock bag or into a non-leaking plastic bucket with a lid. To prevent contamination of the test requisition, attach it to the outside of the secondary container.
6. A large batch of specimens may be transported in a sealed cooler or bucket or rack labeled "biohazard bloods & body fluids." may occur with surgical specimens, or Courier drop-offs.
7. Hospital personnel should take specimens to the Central Processing area in the laboratory or if the specimen needs to go directly to a specific department such as

Cytology, take it directly to that department. Separate Routines from Stat priority specimens. Notify Specimen Processor or Data Entry personnel of all specimens needing expedition.

Specimens such as blood bags from possible transfusion reactions, all fluids: amniotic, CSF, gastric, paracentesis, peritoneal, pleural, synovial, thoracentesis must be manually transported to the lab.

8. Once specimens have been processed, those being transported to another laboratory facility or to a Reference Lab, must be accompanied by a transport list. Microbiology, Stat, frozen, refrigerated and room temperature specimens must be put on individual transit lists.
9. Specimens are placed into the appropriate temperature holding receptacles e.g. freezer, refrigerator, ambient, awaiting Courier pick-up for delivery to its destination lab.
10. When the courier arrives for specimen pick-up, specimens are placed onto their appropriate container. (Cooler with ice packs, dry ice, or plastic container for room temperature specimens.)

B. Hospital – Pneumatic Tube Systems

There are several different types of pneumatic tube systems utilized within University hospital. Some systems support the capability for specimen transport and others do not. Those for specimen transport of laboratory specimens utilize different colored pneumatic tubes. A red pneumatic tube is used strictly for transport of Blood Bank specimens and products. Orange and clear pneumatic tubes are used for the transport of acceptable blood and body fluids, see list below. Some pneumatic tube systems are only suitable for sending inter-departmental mail, correspondence, requisitions, etc. **The systems that are capable of transporting blood and body fluid specimens must have the specimen properly prepared prior to transporting the specimen to the laboratory.**

1. Specimens that CAN be placed in the pneumatic tube:
 - a. Blood collected in vacutainer tubes (If stopper has been removed for any reason, DO NOT SEND VIA THE TUBE SYSTEM.)
 - b. Urine specimens
 - c. Sputum
 - d. Culturette swabs
 - e. Occult blood cards
 - f. Blood Cultures
 - g. Arterial Blood Gases
2. Specimens that CANNOT be placed in pneumatic tube:

- a. Body fluids of any kind
 - b. Feces
 - c. Blood in restoppered vacutainer tubes
 - d. 24 hour urines
 - e. Formalin and/or alcohol preserved specimens
 - f. Blood units involved in possible transfusion reactions
 - g. Platelet Function study specimens (TEG)
 - h. CJD suspect specimens (See policy AD 800.111.1)
3. Specimen Preparation:
- a. To prevent breakage, insert specimens into biohazard bag. Place specimen into bubble wrap bag and seal by removing adhesive strip and folding top over and onto other side of bubble wrap. This will help cushion the specimen(s). Note: Some carriers contain foam rubber inserts instead of bubble wrap bags.
 - b. Roll the plastic bubble wrap to fit inside the pneumatic tube carrier.
 - c. Place any paperwork in the carrier outside of the bubble wrap.

IV. References:

(CLSI. *Collection, Transport, and Processing of Blood specimens for Testing Plasma-Based coagulation Assays and molecular Hemostasis Assays; Approved Guidelines-fifth Edition*. CLSI document H21-A5. Wayne, PA: Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute; 2008.)