

How to Collect Sputum

Sputum collection is an important part of the tuberculosis (TB) checkup. This test is used to find out if you have TB disease or not. Sputum comes from the lungs. It is produced by a deep cough, from the chest. Sputum is **not** saliva or spit from the mouth.

Up to three plastic bottles to collect sputum samples will be given to you. Follow the steps below to collect your sputum. Do this every day right after waking up in the morning. **Use a different plastic bottle each day.**

1. **Do not** eat or drink, brush your teeth, smoke or use mouthwash before you collect your sputum early in the morning.
2. Remove the plastic bottle from the plastic bag. Do not remove the Lab Form from the bag. Open the plastic bottle. **Do not** touch the inside of the bottle or the cap.
3. Breathe in deeply two or three times and then cough deeply from the chest to bring up sputum from the lungs (thick sputum collects in the lungs overnight). Try to cough up at least 1 to 2 teaspoons.
4. Spit the sputum into the plastic bottle. Close the plastic bottle cap tightly.
5. Place the bottle into the plastic bag.
6. Refrigerate the bag with the sputum bottle right away to keep it cold. **Do not** freeze the sputum bottle.
7. Wash your hands.

Take the collected sputum samples back to your nurse so they can send them to the lab for testing.

If you have any questions, please contact _____
at _____.

