



The Calgary Zone Microbiology performs a wide variety of microbiological testing including Bacteriology, Mycology, Rapid Virology, Molecular Diagnostics and Parasitology. All Mycobacteriology and Viral Cultures are referred to Public Health or other reference laboratory.

Test Information

Microbiology testing information is accessible by searching in the [Alberta Precision Laboratories \(APL\) Test Directory](#). Search by entering the query test or source into the “Test Search Box”.

Each Microbiology test directory page includes specimen collection, storage and if applicable, transport time requirements.

Gram stain results are routinely included with culture requests with the following exceptions:

- Burn swab cultures
- Routine urine cultures
- Catheter tip cultures
- Infection surveillance requests
- Negative blood cultures
- Fungal cultures

Culture results routinely include all clinically relevant pathogens for the specific site/source.

Susceptibility results are provided as appropriate.

Collection

For information regarding Calgary Zone Microbiology specimen collection containers refer to [Microbiology Specimen Collection Containers MI6152](#)

For specimen acceptance and rejection policies refer to [Specimen Acceptance and Identification](#)

For specific specimen collection instructions refer to:

- [Body Fluid Collection Guidelines](#)
- [CSF Collection Guidelines](#)
- [Urine Collection Guidelines](#)
- [Bronchial Alveolar Lavage \(BAL\) and Bronchial Wash \(BW\) Guideline-Calgary Zone](#)
- Blood Culture Collection Guideline for Healthcare Providers (*In development*)

Microbiology Physician Collection Guidelines are as follows:

- [MI6004 Collection of Superficial Mycology Specimen - Guidelines for Physicians](#)
- [MI6005 Collection of Samples for Anaerobes - Guideline for Physicians](#)
- [MI6006 Eye Specimen Collection - Guidelines for Physicians](#)
- [MI6009 Urine Vacutainer Tube for Culture and Sensitivity](#)
- [MI6044 Instructions for Use of Attests-Biological Indicators](#)
- [MI6045 Instructions for Use of ATI® Spore-O-Chex™ Biological Indicator Strip](#)
- [MI6106 Gastric or Duodenal Biopsy Collection for Helicobacter Collection](#)
- [MI6170 APTIMA® Vaginal Swab Specimen Collection Kit for Chlamydia trachomatis/Neisseria gonorrhoeae/Trichomonas vaginalis testing from Vaginal Sources Guidelines for Physicians](#)
- [MI6718 APTIMA® Multitest Collection Kit for Chlamydia trachomatis/Neisseria gonorrhoeae/Trichomonas vaginalis from Rectal Sources Guidelines for Physicians](#)
- [MI6719 APTIMA® Multitest Collection Kit for Chlamydia trachomatis/Neisseria gonorrhoeae/Trichomonas vaginalis from Throat Sources Guidelines for Physicians](#)
- [MI6173 Catheter Collection for Urine Culture](#)

For patient collected specimens refer to the appropriate [patient instruction sheet](#)



**Ordering/
Requisition
Requirements**

For a complete listing of Microbiology requisitions refer to [APL Requisitions](#).

- [Microbiology Requisition\(REQ9021MI\)](#)
- [Microbiology Infection Surveillance Requisition \(7828M\)](#)
- [Microbiology Reference Organism & Specimen Investigation Request \(MI6123\)](#)
- [Bronchoalveolar Lavage/ Bronchial Wash Requisition \(REQ9024MI\)](#)

Correct and complete demographic and test order information is required on all requisitions. Refer to [Completing the Requisition](#) and [Test Request \(Requisition\) Requirements](#). Ensure to complete the requisition with the date and time of specimen collection.

Ensure the Microbiology Requisition (REQ9021MI) includes all relevant patient history, i.e. travel, suspected organisms/infection/diagnosis, if the patient is immunosuppressed or neutropenic, and list all antibiotics the patient is currently taking. Fungal culture must indicate specific fungal request on requisition; in cases of systemic mycoses, specify the organism suspected and pertinent clinical history.

A completed history form is required for malaria and stool O&P test requests

- [MI6002 Malaria History Form](#)
- [MI6011 Stool Ova & Parasite History Form](#)

**Specimen
Labelling
Requirements**

All specimens must be appropriately labelled with patient's first and last name and a unique second identifier. Refer to [Sample Labelling Requirements](#).

When multiple samples are submitted to the laboratory at the same time for the same patient, include:

- Exact site (source/type) of sample
- Date and time of collection

Multiple specimens requiring individual diagnosis should be placed in separate collection containers.

**Specimen
Packaging**

Ensure specimens are packaged correctly; refer to [Calgary Specimen Transport](#) for [Specimen Packaging Instructions](#) For bronchoscopy specimen transport, refer to [Bronchoscopy Specimen Packaging Instructions REG5286](#)

**Specimen
Transport**

Transport times for microbiology specimens are critical in order to optimize test sensitivity. Accurate results depend on the specimen being received in Microbiology laboratory as soon as possible.

Routine microbiology specimens collected at a Physician's office need to be transported to the laboratory within 24 hours of collection. If a delay is expected in delivery of the specimen to the lab (e.g. weekend) or after the Calgary Zone courier has completed the daily pickup then the patient can drop off their specimen at the most convenient APL Patient Service Centre (PSC).

- Patients do NOT need to wait or book an appointment when dropping off a specimen. They can drop off the specimen at the desk with a PSC staff member.
- If this occurs on a Friday afternoon or evening, and nearby PSCs have already closed, drop off the specimen(s) at a PSC that is open on Saturdays. Refer to APL Calgary Zone Patient Service Centre (PSC) Hours & Locations: <https://www.albertaprecisionlabs.ca/Page13728.aspx> (Filter Items: **Calgary**)
- Store specimens in accordance with requirements indicated in the APL Test Directory until pick-up or drop-off.



Specimen referral to Calgary Microbiology at the DSC

Specimens referred into Calgary Zone Microbiology at the Diagnostic and Scientific Centre (DSC) must be accompanied by a complete and legible [Microbiology Reference Organism & Specimen Investigation Request MI6123](#). For more information on completing the requisition, see [Requisitions and Completion Aides](#).

Isolates and specimens from other laboratory sites should be referred as per the requisition. For other tests not included on the requisition, healthcare professionals can consult the Microbiologist on Call. Contact Alberta Precision Laboratories at 403-770-3600. Test results will be sent to the ordering laboratory location indicated on the requisition.

Resources

Healthcare personnel requiring additional information regarding data entry, optimal specimens, specimen containers, and/or specimen transportation contact the Laboratory Information Centre at 403-770-3600.

Refer to the Calgary Zone [Antibiograms](#) (Healthcare Providers/Guidelines and Resources) for a summary of the cumulative annual antimicrobial susceptibility rates.

To request cornea scrapings collection kits complete the [Corneal Scrapings Bedside Media Kits MI6133](#).