

Specimen Collection Instructions – Blood Cultures

A. Venipuncture-Adults

1. After palpation of the vein, cleanse the site with Chloraprep™ antiseptic skin prep.
2. Pinch the wings of the applicator, there should be an audible pop as the ampule breaks.
3. Saturate the sponge by gently pressing it against the treatment area.
4. Using a **back and forth scrubbing motion**, completely wet the treatment area: 30 seconds for dry sites, 2 minutes for wet sites.
5. Allow the prepped area to dry completely. Do not blot or wipe the solution away. Discard the applicator after a single use.
6. Sterilize the top of the blood culture bottles by wiping with sterile 70% alcohol pad. Allow to dry.
7. If further palpation of the vein is required, sterilize a finger as listed in steps 1-3, or use a sterile glove.
8. Perform a venipuncture with a syringe and needle, or through a transfer set using a double-ended needle.
9. Draw volume is up to 10mL each per FAN aerobic and anaerobic bottles, up to 4 mL for FAN pediatric bottles.
10. Remove the needle and discard into a sharps container, and aseptically attach a new needle or transfer device.
11. Transfer blood immediately to the blood culture bottles, and mix by inverting 3-5 times to prevent clotting.
12. Clean the tops of each bottle with a sterile alcohol pad, and transport bottles immediately to the lab.

B. Venipuncture- Babies

This procedure is to be used with children aged two months or less.

1. Follow skin preparation steps as outlined under Venipuncture - Adult.
2. Wipe off the preparation area with sterile saline to minimize alcohol absorption. Be careful not to compromise the sterile site.
3. Sterilize the top of the blood culture bottles by wiping with sterile 70% alcohol pad. Allow to dry.
4. If further palpation of the vein is required, sterilize a finger as listed in steps 1-3, or use a sterile glove.
5. Perform a venipuncture with a syringe and needle, or through a transfer set using a double-ended needle.
6. Remove the needle and discard into a sharps container, and aseptically attach a new needle.
7. Transfer blood immediately to the blood culture bottles, up to 4 mL per FAN pediatric bottle and mix thoroughly to prevent clotting.
13. Clean the tops of each bottle with a sterile alcohol pad, and transport bottles immediately to the lab.

C. Central Line Venous Draws

NOTE: Central lines are to be used for blood culture collection only in the event that peripheral cultures cannot be obtained or the doctor specifically orders a blood culture to be collected from a line.

1. IV infusions must be clamped or shut off for 3 to 5 minutes before sampling specimen.
2. Cleanse the tops of blood culture bottles with sterile 70% alcohol pad and allow to dry. Do not use iodine.

3. Attach 20 mL syringe using sterile technique to new positive pressure valve leaving the valve in the sterile packaging for later use
4. Scrub existing white positive pressure valve for 15 seconds with alcohol swab. This is standard practice any time IV line is accessed.
5. Attach a 10 mL syringe filled with sterile normal saline to existing valve.
6. Flush the catheter and then withdraw and re-instill 6mL of blood.
7. Repeat this aspiration and re-infusion procedure for a total of three times. **NOT TO BE DONE WITH ARTERIAL LINES.**
8. Remove and discard existing valve.
9. Attach prepared valve syringe combination to catheter and withdraw 20 mL of blood for each adult blood culture set, up to 4 mL for a pediatric blood culture bottle.
10. Detach syringe from port, attach sterile needle or transfer device to syringe, and add up to 10mL sample into each FAN aerobic and FAN anaerobic bottle. For pediatric, or samples ≤ 5 ml, place all of the sample into the FAN pediatric bottle.

Mix contents of bottles by gentle inversion 3 to 5 times. Clean the blood culture bottle tops with alcohol to remove any residual blood on the septum and transport immediately to the Laboratory.