

BEST PRACTICE BULLETIN

Important - Please review with clinic staff

Preventing Test Cancellations | Lavender Top Tube (LT) Specimens

Proper specimen collection and handling techniques are essential to producing quality samples for testing. Many test cancellations are a direct result of improper specimen collection and handling prior to arrival at the laboratory. These are referred to as pre-analytic influences.

The following specimen conditions will adversely affect results and may lead to test cancellations:

- Diluted specimens (can occur when heparin or saline are introduced into tube during collection)
- Clotted Lavender Top specimens
- Specimens delayed in transit (too old for testing)

To prepare a quality Lavender Top specimen and prevent test cancellations:

- Before obtaining a blood sample from a central venous catheter, withdraw and discard 5-10 mL of fluid from each catheter port (per facility protocol).
- When filling tube, allow vacuum to fill to the proper level. **Do not** force-fill with a syringe.
 - LT is a partial fill tube. Fill up to white mark on label.
- Gently **invert tube 5-10 times** to properly mix anticoagulant with blood to prevent clotting. **Do not** shake.
- Refrigerate (36° - 46° F). Keep tubes away from freezer, since freezing will lyse cells and decrease cell counts.
- Ship LT specimens for arrival at the laboratory **within 5 days of the collection date**. Specimens older than 5 days are not viable for testing.

NOTE: If both Hematology and PTH tests are ordered, collect two separate Lavender tubes



Lavender Top Tube

Fill to proper level (white mark on label)

Gently invert 5-10 times to mix anticoagulant with blood to prevent clotting

Refrigerate (36° - 46° F)

Specimen must be tested within 5 days of the collection date

***Refer to *Quality Specimen Collection & Handling* video and instructional guides for additional details.**

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