



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health • Epidemiology Section
State Laboratory of Public Health

PO Box 28047 • Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-8047
Tel 919-733-7834 • Fax 919-733-8695 • MSC 1918

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Leah Devlin, DDS, MPH
State Health Director

Memorandum

To: Local Health Directors, Hospitals, Private Laboratories, TB Nurses, and Laboratorians
From: Shadia S. Barghothi, Mycobacteriology Laboratory Supervisor *SSB*
Dr. Samuel N. Merritt, Microbiology Unit Manager *JM*
CC: Dr. Carol Dukes Hamilton, Dr. Leslie Wolf, Dr. Jeff Engel, Dr. Lou Turner, Vickie Whitaker, Lab Improvement Staff
Date: 5/6/2008
Re: Mycobacteriology Testing at NCSLPH

In order to provide quality results, the Mycobacteriology laboratory at the NC State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) has re-evaluated specimen acceptance criteria and made several changes. The following changes are effective immediately.

1. **Stool specimens:** NCSLPH will only accept stools for suspected gastrointestinal tuberculosis (GI-TB). Prior approval from the Mycobacteriology laboratory is required for all stool samples. Any stool specimens received without prior approval will be rejected and discarded. Stool is not a recommended specimen for identification of disseminated MAC and has a poor recovery rate. Therefore, we will only accept stools from patients with highly suspect GI-TB.

Reference: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5315a1.htm>

2. **Age of Specimens:** CDC recommends specimens are received by the laboratory within 24 hours of collection. Due to shipment delays, some specimens may exceed this timeline. Any specimen received more than 7 days after collection will not be tested, however.

3. **Mixed Reference Cultures:** NCSLPH will no longer accept mixed or contaminated reference cultures. If a laboratory is unable to isolate the colonies, contact the NCSLPH for guidance (919-807-8620). Any culture received that is mixed with yeast or other bacteria will be rejected.

Thank you for your cooperation in our efforts to improve quality patient care and improve turnaround time for final results for NCSLPH.



North Carolina Public Health
Working for a healthier and safer North Carolina
Everywhere. Everyday. Everybody.



Location: 306 N. Wilmington Street • Bath Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27601