

# Sputum collection instructions

## 1. Indications

Pneumonia, bronchopneumonia, necrotizing pneumonia, lung abscess or cavitory lesions, interstitial infiltrates.

## 2. Materials

- Sputum collection device or **sterile specimen cup**.
- Glass of water.

## 3. Specimen collection

- Collect sputum specimen as soon as possible after waking in the morning.
- Gargle with water immediately prior to obtaining a sputum specimen to reduce the number of oral bacteria. Do not use a mouthwash or any other gargle.
- Press the rim of the specimen container under the lower lip to catch all of the expectorated or coughed sputum.
- Cough deeply and expectorate sputum (not saliva) into the cup.
- Close the lid securely and notify your caregiver that your specimen is ready for transport to the laboratory.
- For acid-fast culture, three (3) specimens collected at a minimal interval of 8 to 24 hours, with one specimen being a first morning specimen, are recommended for adequate recovery.
- Transport the specimen to the Microbiology Laboratory at room temperature within 24 hours of collection for routine respiratory cultures. For other test requests, refer to specific test catalog instructions.



*Sterile specimen cup*