

## Guidelines for Submitting Specimens to the Special Pathogens Branch

### Serology:

- The following specimen types may be submitted:
  - Serum drawn near admission with clots retained from red top tube
  - As late a serum as available
  - Convalescent serum drawn approximately 21 days after first specimen
  - Post-mortem heart blood
  
- Specimen packaging requirements:
  - Minimum volume: 1ml serum (2.5 ml preferred)
  - Serum samples must be shipped with a cold pack, or on dry ice in a **plastic** tube.
  - Clots and acute blood for virus isolation must be sent on dry ice in a **plastic** tube.

### Immunohistochemistry (IHC):

- The following types of formalin-fixed or paraffin-embedded tissues may be submitted:
  - Lung, kidney, and spleen tissues are preferred.
  - Other tissues that may be sent include lymph nodes, heart, pancreas, pituitary, brain, or liver.
  
- Specimen packaging requirements:
  - Paraffin blocks are preferred, particularly if death was not recent.
  - If paraffin blocks are not available, formalin-fixed tissues may be sent.
  - Ship paraffin blocks or formalin-fixed tissue at room temperature--**do not freeze**.
  - An autopsy or surgical report must accompany the specimen.

### Virus Isolation/PCR:

- The following types of samples may be submitted:
  - Ante-mortem: You may submit biopsy material of the lung or bone marrow aspirate or clot.
  - Post-mortem: spleen, lung, kidney, liver, lymph nodes, heart, pancreas, pituitary, brain, or liver tissue, or heart blood.
  
- Specimen packaging requirements:
  - Clots must be sent on dry ice in a **plastic** tube.
  - Tissues should be **at least** 1cm<sup>3</sup>.
  - Buffy coat and fresh tissues must be shipped on dry ice.

### **NOTES:**

- 1) **NO** specimens accepted without prior consultation. Call for mailing address 404.639.1510 or 404.639.1115.
- 2) Send specimens by **overnight** courier (Federal Express preferred) and fax airway bill number and packing list to SPB at 404.639.1509 or 404.639.1118. International submitter should consider direct shipment with an airline to expedite arrival at CDC.
- 3) **Do NOT freeze glass tubes!**
- 4) Package in accordance with I.A.T.A. regulations to prevent leakage.  
(I.A.T.A.: <http://www1.iata.org/index.htm?id=3>)  
(OHS: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ohs/biosfty/shipdir.htm>—packaging/shipping information)
- 5) Label sample as diagnostic specimen and include the following information: your name, the patient's name, test(s) requested, date of collection, laboratory or accession number, and the type of specimen being shipped, a specimen submission form, and a case report form (for hantavirus testing only). On the outside of the box, specify how the specimen should be stored: refrigerated, frozen, or do not refrigerate.
- 6) Subsequent shipments from outbreaks may require U.S. Public Health Service permits.