

Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research  
Microbiological Services

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Monday - Friday

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday and Holidays

9 a.m. - 12 noon for TB testing

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING STOOL SPECIMENS FOR NOROVIRUS PCR ASSAY

During outbreak investigations, specimens should be collected from at least five ill people. Ideally, stool specimens should be collected during the acute phase of illness (within 48 to 72 hours after symptoms start). The greatest amount of virus is shed during the acute phase of illness. Norovirus can sometimes be detected in stool specimens that are collected later in the illness or after the symptoms have resolved (up to 7 to 10 days after onset).

1. Collect the raw or unpreserved unformed stool specimen in a clean, leak-proof, preservative-free container.
2. Label the stool specimen container with Patient's Name, Sample ID (or other unique identifier), and date of collection. Fill out appropriate laboratory requisition.
3. Place each specimen container in a separate biohazard bag and seal the bag. Place laboratory requisition in sleeve outside of the bag.
4. Store specimen at 2–8 °C. The specimen is stable for up to two days when stored at 2–8 °C.
5. For transport, place in an insulated, waterproof polystyrene container with refrigerant packs.