

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 SPECIMENS FOR VIRAL GASTROENTERITIS.

Note: Ideally, specimens should be collected within 2-4 days of illness, but can be collected up to 10 days after onset. In an outbreak, 4 specimens collected within 2-4 days of illness are sufficient to confirm Norovirus. More specimens (up to 10) may be necessary if specimens are not collected until late in the course of the disease (7-10 days after onset).

1. Collect approximately 2 to 5 ml (or 2 to 5 g) of liquid or unformed stool specimen in a clean, dry, leak proof container without preservatives.
2. Write patients name and date of specimen collection on the specimen container. Fill out the laboratory requisition form.
3. Place container inside plastic bag. Place laboratory requisition in sleeve outside of the bag.
4. Transport specimen to the laboratory on ice. Specimens can be refrigerated (2-8C) for up to 2 days.
5. Submit the specimen to the Public Health Laboratory (at the above address), Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm