

Specimen Collection Checklist

(Please note, these are general recommendations, but may not apply in your state.
Always check your state's protocols before do any specimen collection)

- Be prepared before an outbreak occurs**
 - Know your state's protocols
 - Have fully stocked specimen collection kits on hand
 - Check specimen collection kits regularly for expired or missing items

- Establish basic information about the outbreak**
 - Before requesting tests from the laboratory, make sure you know:
 - Number of people ill
 - Duration of illness
 - Clinical symptoms
 - Known exposures
 - Epidemic Curve
 - Any other descriptive or analytical evidence about the outbreak

- Establish that laboratory testing is necessary**
 - Laboratory testing can be time consuming and expensive. Establish that it is necessary in the context of the outbreak investigation. The lab or members of the outbreak investigation team can help establish if testing is necessary

- Contact the laboratory and be prepared to communicate information about the outbreak**
 - In most cases, the laboratory will provide authorization to conduct testing and provide guidance about how to collect, package, and transport specimens

- Collect specimens**
 - Check with your lab if you are unsure which specimens to collect or the correct collection protocols

- Provide detailed instructions to patients!

Package specimens

- Check with your lab for correct packaging protocols
- Make sure all collection tubes have the required patient information
- Fill out a separate requisition form for each specimen
- Confirm specimens are correctly packaged. If there are any leaks, the lab will not test the specimen!

Transport specimens

- Check with your lab for their preferred means of transporting specimens

Interpret laboratory results