

# Specimen Collection Guidelines for Suspected Cases of EVD

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## Approval:

- Provincial EVD Preparedness Task Group: 08-Oct-2014

## Consultations:

- Infection Prevention and Control Team (Horizon Health Network, Vitalité Health Network, Department of Health)

Department of Health

## Specimen Collection Guidelines for Suspected Cases of EVD

- See the document “Testing Guide for Ebola Virus Disease” for guidance regarding what Laboratory specimens can be collected in designated Ebola/Ebola Suspect Emergency Departments
- A Regional Medical Officer of Health must authorize the collection of specimens for Ebola virus diagnostic testing
- Only specimens essential for diagnosis or monitoring should be obtained. The range of testing is limited—confer with laboratory prior to collection
- Always notify the Laboratory **prior** to collecting any specimens
- Do not take requisitions into the patient room or place them inside biohazard bags
- Use staff who are experienced with specimen collection techniques—high risk for illness post sharps injury
- Safety engineered devices\*\* must be used where possible
- Staff collecting specimens must wear the same personal protective equipment used by other health care workers. Use double gloves to facilitate the decontamination of the exterior of the specimen container
- Glass specimen containers must not be used
- Specimen containers should be labelled prior to collecting specimens
- Each specimen container must be decontaminated (top layer of gloves can be removed following decontamination of the specimen container).
- Each decontaminated specimen container must be placed in a sealable disposable biohazard bag with either adsorbent material or paper towels
- The exterior of each biohazard bag must be disinfected prior to leaving the room
- Each biohazard bag must be placed in a transport container located outside the patient room (using a second clean person to hold the container)
- The transport container must be rigid, durable, leak-proof, and able to be securely closed
- The exterior of the transport container should be clearly labelled as Ebola Suspect
- Requisitions should be clearly labelled as Ebola Suspect
- The transport container with specimens is **NEVER** to be left unattended. It must be delivered immediately into the custody of a Laboratory staff member
- The transport container must be disinfected prior to leaving the Laboratory for re-use
- DO NOT use pneumatic tube systems to transport specimens from suspected/confirmed EVD patients.

\*\* Definition for Safety Engineered Device Taken from Horizon Health Network E-Learning Module

“A device that has a built in sharps injury protection mechanism such as an attached sheath covering the needle or scalpel after use or needles that retract after use. Other types of safety devices include blunt needles or needle-less systems (Saskatchewan Labour, 2006). SEDs protect the user from exposure to blood borne pathogens or chemical hazards (i.e. cytotoxic medications)”

1. Public Health Agency of Canada; Interim Biosafety Guidelines for Laboratories Handling Specimens from Patients Under Investigation for Ebola Virus Disease. Accessed October 3, 2014 at: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/vhf-fvh/ebola-biosafety-biosecurite-eng.php>
2. Public Health Ontario; Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Interim Sample Collection and Submission Guide accessed October 3, 2014 at: [http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Ebola\\_Virus\\_Disease\\_\(EVD\)\\_Sample\\_Collection\\_Submission\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Ebola_Virus_Disease_(EVD)_Sample_Collection_Submission_Guide.pdf)