

Collection of Specimens

Many of the specimens needed for diagnostic examination of children are collected in much the same way as they are for adults. Older children are able to cooperate if given proper instruction regarding what is expected of them. Infants and small children, however, are unable to follow directions or control body functions sufficiently to help in collecting some specimens.

Fundamental Procedure Steps Common to All Procedures

The following steps are very important for every procedure and should be considered fundamental aspects of care. These steps, although important, are not listed in each of the specimen collection procedures.

1. Assemble the necessary equipment.
2. Identify the child using two patient identifiers (e.g., patient name and medical record or birth date; neither can be a room number). Compare the same two identifiers with the specimen container and order.
3. Perform hand hygiene, maintain aseptic technique, and follow standard precautions.
4. Explain the procedure to parents and child according to the developmental level of the child; reassure the child that the procedure is not a punishment.
5. Provide atraumatic care and position the child securely.
6. Prepare area with antiseptic agent.
7. Place specimens in appropriate containers and apply a patient ID label to the specimen container in the presence of the child and family.
8. Discard puncture device in puncture-resistant container near the