

BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES

-GTO-



1. Red Cap (Plain / Clot Activator)

Additive

- None **or** clot activator (silica)

Specimen

- Serum

Common Tests

- Serology (HIV, Hepatitis, VDRL)
- Blood bank tests (crossmatch, antibody screening – if no gel)
- Hormone assays
- Drug levels
- Chemistry tests requiring serum

Special Requirements

- Allow blood to clot **20–30 minutes**
- Centrifuge before testing
- Do **not** mix aggressively

2. Yellow Cap (SST – Serum Separator Tube)

Additive

- Clot activator + **gel separator**

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-GTO-

Specimen

- **Serum**

Common Tests

- Routine biochemistry
- Lipid profile
- Liver function tests (LFT)
- Renal function tests (RFT)
- Thyroid function tests (TFT)

Special Requirements

- Allow complete clotting before centrifugation
- Gel forms a barrier between serum and cells

3. Purple / Lavender Cap

Additive

- **EDTA (K₂ or K₃)**

Specimen

- **Whole blood**

Common Tests

- Complete Blood Count (CBC / FBC)
- Peripheral blood film
- HbA1c
- ESR (automated methods)
- CD4 count

Special Requirements

- Mix gently **8–10 inversions**
- Do **not** centrifuge for CBC
- Prevent clotting immediately after collection

BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES

-GTO-

4. Black Cap

Additive

- Sodium citrate (3.8%)

Specimen

- Whole blood

Common Tests

- ESR (Westergren method)

Special Requirements

- Must be filled **exactly to the mark**
- Blood-to-anticoagulant ratio is critical
- Mix gently

5. Light Blue Cap

Additive

- Sodium citrate (3.2%)

Specimen

- Plasma

Common Tests

- Coagulation studies:
 - PT / INR
 - APTT
 - D-dimer
 - Fibrinogen
 - Coagulation factor assays

Special Requirements

- Fill tube **completely** (9:1 blood-to-citrate ratio)
- Mix gently 3–4 times
- Centrifuge promptly if plasma is needed

BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES

-GTO-

6. Green Cap

Additive

- **Heparin (Lithium or Sodium)**

Specimen

- **Plasma**

Common Tests

- Electrolytes
- Blood gases (if specified)
- Ammonia
- Some emergency chemistry tests

Special Requirements

- Mix immediately to prevent clotting
- Not suitable for coagulation or blood bank tests

7. Grey Cap

Additive

- **Sodium fluoride + Potassium oxalate**

Specimen

- **Plasma**

Common Tests

- Fasting blood glucose
- Random blood sugar
- Oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT)
- Lactate

Special Requirements

- Inhibits glycolysis (prevents glucose breakdown)
- Mix gently after collection
- Ideal for delayed processing

BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES

-GTO-

8. White / Pearl Cap (if present in similar sets)

Additive

- EDTA + gel separator

Specimen

- Plasma

Common Tests

- Molecular diagnostics
- Viral load testing
- PCR-based tests

Special Requirements

- Centrifuge promptly
- Avoid contamination










⚠ Important General Notes

- **Order of draw matters** to prevent additive contamination
- Tubes must be **mixed gently**, not shaken
- Incorrect filling can invalidate results
- Always match tube type to test requested

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Blood Collection Tubes & Their Uses

 <p>Red Top Tube</p> <p>Additive: None / Clot Activator Sample: Serum</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biochemistry tests• Serology• Hormone levels	 <p>Yellow / Gold Top (SST)</p> <p>Additive: Clot Activator + Gel Sample: Serum</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liver Function Test (LFT)• Lipid Profile• Thyroid Tests	
 <p>Purple / Lavender Top</p> <p>Additive: EDTA Sample: Whole Blood</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CBC• ESR• HbA1c <p><i>Prevents clotting & preserves cells</i></p>	 <p>Blue Top</p> <p>Additive: Sodium Citrate Sample: Plasma</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PT / INR• APTT• Coagulation Studies	
 <p>Green Top</p> <p>Additive: Heparin Sample: Plasma</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electrolytes• ABG-Related Tests• Ammonia Levels	 <p>Grey Top</p> <p>Additive: Sodium Fluoride + Potassium Oxalate Sample: Plasma</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blood Glucose• Lactate <p><i>Prevents glucose breakdown</i></p>	
 <p>Black Top</p> <p>Additive: Sodium Citrate (Special Ratio) Sample: Whole Blood</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESR (Westergren Method)	 <p>Pink Top</p> <p>Additive: EDTA Sample: Whole Blood</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blood Grouping• Cross-Matching (Blood Bank)	 <p>Royal Blue Top</p> <p>Additive: None / EDTA / Heparin</p> <p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heavy Metal Tests (Lead, Zinc, Copper)

Order of Draw (Important for Exams & Practice)

