

Microbiology Department Patient information sheet:

Patients Guide to Taking Specimens

Sputum collection

Sputum is the phlegm coughed up from your lungs. It is not spit or mucous from the mouth or back of the throat. Your GP or other health care professional may ask you to produce a sputum specimen to aid diagnosis of the bacteria that may be affecting your lungs in various respiratory diseases:

- Pneumonia
- COPD exacerbations
- Bronchiectasis.

Collecting a sputum sample

- Rinse mouth out with water (not mouth wash) and remove dentures if present.
- Cough hard to bring up sputum from deep in your lungs (this may take a lot of coughing).
- From the mouth the sputum should go directly into the container provided then screw the top on securely. Wash hands.
- Label the container with your name, date of birth and date of sample collection.
- Place container in a sealed plastic bag.

Deliver to GP or laboratory as soon as possible. If there is a delay, the sample can be kept in the fridge for up to 24hours.

Note your GP may need to take several other specimens to diagnose your respiratory condition. E.g. throat swab, urine or blood.

Results

The majority of sputum results will be reported back to the requesting Doctor within 4 days.

Please note - results cannot be given over the telephone.

Patients will be advised of the result by the requesting clinician i.e GP or Consultant.

Our mission

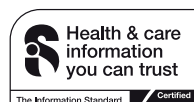
To provide the excellent care we would expect for our families.

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

The Bournemouth Hospital Charity raises funds for the Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals to enhance patient care and purchase items which directly benefit patients and staff above and beyond that which can be funded by the NHS alone. If you would like to contribute to the Bournemouth Hospital Charity please contact them on **01202 704060**, email **charity@rbch.nhs.uk** or visit **www.bournemouthhospitalcharity.org**.

If you have any queries or concerns about your care at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) would be happy to help you and can be contacted on **01202 704886/704301** or **pals@rbch.nhs.uk**.

If you would like this leaflet printed in a larger font, please contact the Communications Team on **01202 704905** during the office hours of 8.30am-5pm Monday - Friday.



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