

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
WILLIAM A. HINTON STATE LABORATORY INSTITUTE
CHILDHOOD LEAD SCREENING LABORATORY
305 SOUTH STREET, BOSTON, MA 02130**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FINGERSTICK SAMPLE COLLECTION FOR LEAD TESTING

Specimen Type: Fingerstick blood samples collected in EDTA.

Container for Specimen: Collect samples in lead-free EDTA anticoagulant tubes, such as “Sarstedt Microvette CB300” tubes. **Do not use expired tubes. Discard any tubes if you are unsure of the expiration date.**

Tubes are available, free of charge from the Childhood Lead Screening Laboratory by calling (617) 983-6665.

Specimen Collection Instructions:

- Use universal precautions when collecting blood samples and follow your facility’s blood collection protocol.
- First, wash the child’s hand thoroughly with soap and water. Clean the finger with alcohol and avoid contact with the cleaned area to decrease the chance of contamination.
- Puncture the finger with a sterile lancet and wipe off the first drop of blood with gauze. Gently milk the finger to establish blood flow.
- Tap the fingerstick tube to release the anticoagulant, hold the tube upright, and touch the center of the blood drop with the tip of the capillary tube. The tube fills automatically by capillary action.
- When the blood begins to flow into the tube, hold tube at a 45 degree angle. Turn the tube slowly to facilitate the mixing of the anticoagulant and the blood.
- Massage the finger to maintain a free flow of blood and fill the tube at least $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Underfilling or overfilling the tube may result in poor specimen quality due to an improper blood to EDTA ratio.
- Once the tube is full, seal the capillary tip with the small cap and keep the large opening sealed with the large cap attached to the tube. Insert the collection tube into the amber protective tube. Vortex, shake or invert the tube to mix anticoagulant with the blood specimen.

Please note: Avoid interrupting the flow of blood. To decrease the chance of contamination, do not spread the blood over a large area and avoid collecting smeared blood.

Labeling of Primary Specimen Container:

Label the tube with the patient’s name and date of birth.

Requisition to Use:

Complete the Childhood Lead Screening Sample Submission form, SS-BL-1-12.

Storage Condition of Specimen Once Collected:

Keep all samples refrigerated until they can be transported or mailed to the laboratory. The quality of the sample may be affected if it is held at room temperature for an extended period of time. Samples should be sent to the laboratory on a daily basis.

Shipping Instructions: Fingerstick blood samples sent to the laboratory through the US mail must comply with the United States Postal Service and Department of Transportation Regulations for “**Exempt Human Specimens**”. The sample must be packaged in a primary receptacle, secondary receptacle and outer packaging. The primary receptacle is the fingerstick tube. The secondary packaging must be leakproof, and we recommend using a zipper-sealed plastic bag. There must be enough absorbent material in the secondary receptacle to contain all liquid found in the primary receptacles, so please include one cotton ball for each fingerstick sample. The outer packaging must be a rigid shipping container, such as a fiberboard box. Padded envelopes can not be used for outer packaging. Mail or deliver samples to:

Childhood Lead Screening Laboratory
William A. Hinton State Laboratory Institute
305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Questions: Contact Childhood Lead Screening Laboratory at (617) 983-6665.