

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

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VENIPUNCTURE SPECIMENS FOR BLOOD LEAD TESTING

Specimen Type: Venous whole blood samples collected in EDTA

Container for Specimen: The laboratory prefers samples to be collected in lead-free EDTA anticoagulant (purple top) tubes, however heparin (green top) tubes are also acceptable. For the safety of the phlebotomist drawing the samples and the analysts testing the samples, we strongly recommend the use of plastic vacutainers with safety closures. **Do not use expired tubes. Discard any tubes if you are unsure of the expiration date.**

Specimen Collection Instructions:

Use universal precautions when collecting blood samples and follow your facility's blood collection protocols.

Please fill the container $\frac{3}{4}$ full to ensure proper blood to EDTA ratio. Underfilling or overfilling the tube may result in poor specimen quality due to an improper blood to EDTA ratio.

Invert the tube several times after collecting the sample to thoroughly mix the anticoagulant with the sample.

Do not pour the venous samples over into any other container. This is a potential source of contamination. Venous samples that have been poured into fingerstick tubes will be considered fingerstick samples.

Mark STAT samples clearly. STAT samples received at the laboratory before 3:00 p.m. will be tested and reported to the provider that day.

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: Venous 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 blood 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 8 cotton balls for every 5 blood tubes. 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.