

Specimen Retention Requirements



Listed below are the specimen retention requirements for samples sent to St. Luke's Laboratory.

Test	Storage Conditions	Length of Time
AFP, Tumor Marker	Refrigerated	3 days
<u>BNP</u>	<u>Refrigerated</u>	<u>24 hours Plasma must be separated from cells.</u>
CA 125	Refrigerated	1 day
Hematology Specimens	Room Temperature	24 hours
	Refrigerated	48 hours
ESR/Sed Rate	Room Temperature	4 hours
	Refrigerated EDTA	12 hours
Estradiol	Refrigerated	2 days
Folate	Refrigerated	48 hours
FT3	Refrigerated	2 days
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Potassium	Refrigerated	1 day (refrigerate aliquot)
Protime	If the patient is not on heparin and the tube is unopened and centrifuged or not centrifuged, the specimen may be sent at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 24 hours; otherwise, double spin the specimen to provide platelet poor plasma and freeze.	
PSA	Refrigerated	48 hours
PTH	Refrigerated	EDTA plasma is the preferred sample type, although serum is acceptable. EDTA specimens should be spun and separated immediately. The plasma is stable at RT for 8 hours, refrigerated for 72 hours, and then frozen. Serum is stable for 4 hours at RT, 48 hours refrigerated, and then frozen.
Retics	Refrigerated	72 hours
Rubella	Refrigerated	6 days
TSH	Refrigerated	5 days (if reflexive TSH, 2 days)
Vitamin B12	Refrigerated	<u>48</u> hours
Vitamin D	Refrigerated	5 days

Not all specimens need to be separated before sending with the courier. Separate and freeze specimens only if you can not get them to us within the above guidelines. A screw top tube should be used for frozen samples that we will refer to a reference lab. Reference labs require frozen samples be sent in a screw top container as a safety issue.

These are the guidelines we present, but we will always do what we can to get you the results that you need for your patient.