

## **PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS – SPUTUM COLLECTION**

Dear Patient:

You have been asked by your physician to collect a sputum sample. The quality of the specimen is very important, so please follow this collection procedure carefully.

If you have any questions, please call Client Services at 800-700-6891.

### **SPUTUM**

Sputum is material that comes from deep in the lungs. It is neither saliva nor secretions from the nose or throat. Thus, it should be coughed up from the lungs and is generally more viscous (thicker) than saliva.

Sputum specimens should consist of 5-15 mL of material collected first thing in the morning after you have brushed your teeth/removed dentures, rinsed your mouth, and gargled with water. (Mouthwashes, which often contain antibacterial agents, should not be used).

Cough deeply and expectorate sputum into the sterile wide-mouth container supplied to you.

**PLEASE NOTE: SALIVA IS UNACCEPTABLE FOR CULTURE**