
Appendix G – Capillary blood storage and shipping protocols

Overview

The shipping and storage protocols presented below were followed to ensure that samples were received by the laboratory in compliance with the respective shipping and storage standards.

Storage and shipping procedures – Blood Samples

Storage: Samples will be stored at a temperature of +4°C and will be shipped within a few days (i.e., no longer than one week).

Procedures for Preparing and Packing blood samples for shipment to the Lab (Laboratoire de Toxicologie / INSPQ):

Pre-packing:

- Notify the key contact (Alain Leblanc) at the laboratory (INSPQ Laboratoire de toxicology) a few days before planned shipment, by e-mail (alain.leblanc@inspq.qc.ca) to ensure someone is available to receive the blood samples.
- Ship samples via a commercial postal service or freight carrier, this shipment method will allow for positive tracking of shipment and proof of delivery to destination.
- Schedule the shipment to arrive on weekdays only. With added precautions (extra insulation or ice), second or third day delivery will get the samples to the lab in good condition.
- Prepare a packing list to be sent together with the specimens. Also email the packing list to the person in charge at the laboratory (Alain Leblanc- alain.leblanc@inspq.qc.ca). The packing list will include specimen identification and sampling date, as well as other relevant details for all samples. (make sure to keep a copy)
- Prepare and enclose an information sheet containing the name, address, email, and telephone number of the person sending the shipment.
- Number the samples with a maximum of 10 characters.
- For each specimen, write the identification on a self-adhesive label with a water-resistant marker (i.e. black color fine point Sharpie marker).
- Then secure label on the container with transparent tape as well.

Packing:

- When handling specimens always wear gloves.
- Verify list of specimens as you are placing them into the storage box before placing them into the insulated container or cooler.
- Group specimens into plastic bags (20 per bag) or put in order into a storage box, if the shipment is more than 25 samples.
- Pack in an insulated container or cooler, with 2-3 cool packs (freezer bricks, refrigerant packs, etc.). It is important that blood samples be kept cool. Fill empty space with bubble wrap, newspaper, packing peanuts, or other material so that the contents cannot shift during shipment. Avoid dry ice at all times.
- Place the packing list in a ziplock bag to avoid it getting wet and put it at the top of the insulated container or cooler. (make sure to keep a copy)

- Seal the insulated container or cooler with tape and a security tie. Place address label and courier label on the box.