Specimen Guide

**Guidelines**

- Submit a complete clinical history including time & date of obtaining the sample
- Submit specimens in proper container or vacutainer tubes
- Each specimen must be clearly labeled as to the source & individual animal identification
- Package the specimen carefully to eliminate breakage in transit
- Samples should arrive before 3:00 PM Monday – Friday & by 9:00 am on Saturday

### Routine Chemistry

Collect blood in sterile red top tube. Allow the blood to clot for 15-30 minutes before centrifuging at a high speed (2500 rpm) for 10 minutes. Remove the serum and transfer into a clean sterile tube. Ship overnight with an ice pack. Minimum of 1 ml of serum should be submitted for most chemistry profiles.

**DO NOT SUBMIT WHOLE BLOOD OR SERUM SEPARATOR TUBES FOR CHEMISTRY TESTS.**

### Hematology

Blood should be collected in EDTA tubes. Tubes MUST be at least 1/3 full. Mix samples immediately after collection. Check for clots & redraw if clots are present. Make 2 peripheral blood smears. Allow to air dry and send with the EDTA specimen. High temperatures & freezing must be avoided. Ship specimens overnight in an appropriate container.

### Bile Acid –Liver Function Test

**Fasting Bile Acid** – Fast patient for 8 to 12 hours, collect clot tube. Centrifuge and remove serum from clot. Check sample for hemolysis & lipemia. Redraw if necessary.

**Post Prandial Bile Acid** – After collecting the fasting sample feed a small amount of low fat food (KD or ID is recommended).

- Dogs < 5 pounds feed 1 tablespoon
- Dogs >5 but <50 pounds feed ¼ cup
- Dogs >50 pounds feed ½ cup

Ensure food is retained. Draw a two hour post prandial serum sample. Centrifuge and separate serum. **DO NOT SUBMIT IN SERUM SEPARATOR TUBES.**

**Random Bile Acid** – Collect in red top tube. Centrifuge and submit like a routine chemistry test.

### Coagulation

All coagulation tests must be collected in a FULL sodium citrate tube (blue top tube). The ratio of blood to anticoagulant is critical. Centrifuge specimen and remove plasma and freeze in a no-additive red top tube. Ship frozen specimen on ice packs overnight. Label specimen as citrated plasma.

### Miscellaneous Test:

**Urinalysis** – Fresh urine should be sent in a sterile container on ice packs. If cytology is desired, submit small amount of urine in an EDTA tube.

**ERD** – 3 ml fresh urine sample (detection of microalbumin levels)

**Coombs/Crossmatch** – Send EDTA and Serum sample.

**Snap 4DX** – 0.5 ml serum or EDTA plasma. Detection of Dirofilaria immitis (HW), Anaplasma phagocytophilum (AP) Borrelia burgdorferi (LY) & Ehrlichia canis (EC).

### Special Chemistry Test:

**TSH, T4, & Progesterone** - Draw samples in a sterile red top tube. Allow the sample to clot thoroughly before centrifuging. Separate serum & transfer to a clean tube. **Progesterone** testing must be shipped overnight. For Saturday delivery, please ship UPS.

**ACTH Stimulation Test** - For dogs & cats collect a baseline sample and administer 5 µg/kg IV and obtain a post sample at 1 hour later.

**Low Dose Dexamethasone** – for canine, collect baseline sample then administer 0.01 mg/kg dexamethasone iv. Obtain post samples at 4 and 8 hours.

**Ionized Calcium** – Draw in red top tube. Centrifuge & immediately freeze serum. Send on ice packs.

### Parasyitology:

Submit 3-5 g fresh feces in a sterile leak proof container. Please do NOT submit specimen in gloves.

### Cytology

**Peritoneal, thoracic, urine & other body fluids** should be transported in an EDTA tube (purple top tube). Submit 2 air-dried, unstained direct smears with the sample. **DO NOT send in formalin**

**Fine needle aspirates or impression smears** should be submitted as air-dried smears. **DO NOT use fixative.** More than one smear is preferred, with sample from 2 to 3 different areas of the lesion.

Please include a complete clinical history and description of condition for all cytology submissions.

**DO NOT SUBMIT SYRINGES.**