

# Microbiology Specimen Storage Prior to Transport

Care with pre-analytical specimen management is critical to optimise accuracy, analysis and interpretation of laboratory results.

Waikato Hospital laboratory is following the same protocol as recommended by Pathlab.

The protocol is based on the IDSA Guidelines “A Guide to Utilisation of the Microbiology for Diagnosis of Infectious Diseases”

Specimens that should ideally be stored at **refrigerator temperature** until transport to the laboratory are as follows:

- All swabs except vaginal swabs
- Urine
- Faeces
- Body fluids/aspirates
- Sputa
- Tissue samples

These specimens should be stored at **ambient room temperature**

- Blood cultures
- Vaginal swabs
- Chlamydia/Gonorrhoea NAAT tube
- Mycology skin scraping

It is best practice to store in the fridge but in some instances, where there is no available specimen fridge, room temperature storage is acceptable, providing samples are collected and transported to the laboratory within 24-48 hours.

The exception is **urine specimens that MUST be refrigerated** if they are not in the laboratory within 2 hours of collection

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