

# NDSU VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

## Collection and Submission Guidelines for *Bacillus anthracis* (Anthrax)

**Instructions:** The following collection and shipping instructions are intended to minimize exposure during collection, shipping and handling at the laboratory. Please follow instructions closely.

**Please call the NDSU-VDL prior to shipping or dropping off your specimen at (701) 231-7527 or (701) 231-8307. Prior notification of the lab helps to ensure same day test results.**

### Collection Guidelines:

- Double exam gloves and take special precautions if you have any open wounds as the majority of human Anthrax cases involve cutaneous infections. Use a needle/syringe apparatus to draw venous blood sample from a peripheral vein. If sufficient blood cannot be obtained, fresh spleen or body cavity fluid is acceptable. If none of the preferred samples are available, an ear notch can be collected. A minimum of 1 mL fluid or 10 grams of tissue are required for testing.
  - Note: Blood can be falsely negative in horses or swine. In addition to blood, submit exudate or affected lymph nodes from these species.
- Transfer the blood/fluid sample to a red top tube (plastic is preferred). **Remove the needle from the tube. Discard the needle/syringe apparatus in an appropriate sharps container; incinerate as soon as possible. Do not send the needle to the laboratory with the specimen.** If submitting tissue, double bag the sample. **Label the specimen** and place in a sealable bag with sufficient absorbent material to contain the amount of fluid.
- Remove gloves, gown, coverall and boot covers; place in a separate container for sterilization or incineration. Sterilize instruments and other non-disposable items by either soaking in a strong bleach solution for 1 hour, autoclaving or boiling for 30 minutes.

### Packaging and Shipping guidelines:

- Line the bottom of the Styrofoam shipping container with paper towels or other absorbent material. Place the sealed bag with the specimen in a Styrofoam shipping container with a frozen ice pack.
- Write "ANTHRAX SUSPECT" on the outside of the Styrofoam container. **Do not write this on the outer box.**
- Fill out [General Submission Form](#). Be specific, include case history and clearly indicate the sample is from an Anthrax suspect. Place the submission form in a sealable bag; place bag on the outside of the Styrofoam shipping container.
- Place the Styrofoam container inside a rigid outer cardboard box. Seal outer box with packaging tape. Attach a Biological Substance Category B, UN3373 label on the outside of the box and affix shipping label/address/sender info. **Next day delivery is recommended.**

Note: Do not place anything other than Anthrax suspect samples in the box. If the sample is positive, any other samples in the same container will be destroyed.

### Post Office Mail Address:

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
NDSU, Dept 7691  
PO Box 6050  
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

### UPS/Fed Ex Address:

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
NDSU Van Es Hall  
1523 Centennial Blvd  
Fargo, ND 58102

### VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

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