From: UCSF-GME
Subject: MESSAGE FROM CLINICAL LABS -- Sputum Samples for TB Testing
Date: Friday, September 11, 2009 4:13:09 PM

TO: UCSF PHYSICIANS AND NURSES

FROM: Clinical Laboratories
Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control

RE: SPUTUM SAMPLES FOR TB TESTING

Effective Monday, Sept. 14, UCSF Medical Center is changing its requirements to rule out active pulmonary TB in adults. The new requirements are:

- Three separate sputum samples
- Obtained in 8-12 hour intervals
- At least one specimen must be an early morning specimen

This change affects adult patients with suspected pulmonary tuberculosis and replaces the previous requirement for three morning sputum samples collected on consecutive days for acid-fast bacillus (AFB) smear testing to "rule out" pulmonary tuberculosis.

The new requirements will align UCSF practice with current national and state guidelines. Generally, this method will allow patients with negative sputum smear results to be released from airborne precautions in two days, after consultation with Infection Control.

Orders for the sputum samples should be written as

Sputum for AFB smear and culture Q8-12 hours x 3, including one early morning specimen. If induced use 10% saline.

Discontinuation of airborne/ AFB precautions still requires three negative AFB smear results, and consultation with Infection Control**.**

Sputum samples collected less than eight hours apart will be pooled and tested as a single specimen by the microbiology laboratory. There is no change in the lab requisition. Submit specimens for both AFB smear and

culture as appropriate.

Pediatric cases continue to be evaluated by gastric lavage AFB culture using three consecutive morning samples.

If you have questions, contact Dr. Steve Miller, director of the UCSF Microbiology Lab, at steve.miller@ucsfmedctr.org or the Department of Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control at 353-4343.

Jensen PA et al. Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of Mycobacterium tuberculosis in Health-Care Settings, 2005. MMWR 2005:54.

Francis J. Curry National Tuberculosis Center, 2007: Tuberculosis Infection Control: A Practical Manual for Preventing TB. www.nationaltbcenter.ucsf.edu