

BODY CAVITY FLUID SPECIMENS

Body cavity fluids are commonly evaluated for the presence of malignant cells from metastatic disease. Body cavity fluids are relatively easy to obtain and are relatively difficult to compromise.

Indications:

Detection and characterization of malignant cells in body cavity fluids.

Specimen:

Fluid obtained from an appropriately performed paracentesis or thoracentesis procedure. The optimum amount of cavity fluid for cytology is 200-500 ml. Small amounts (as little as 10 ml) can be processed but are not optimal.

Supplies:

Standard collection equipment.

Clean collection container of appropriate size. If microbiology studies are desired, container must be sterile.

Collection Procedure:

Using standard techniques, obtain a fluid specimen from the desired body cavity. A minimum of 10 ml of specimen is desired for optional cytologic evaluation. If a large volume of fluid is collected, send the entire specimen (rather than a small aliquot) to the laboratory. If other laboratory studies are desired (e.g. cell count, microbiology, etc.) indicate the tests needed on the requisition form. At ARDX LMC Laboratory, a portion of the specimen will be divided and sent for microbiology studies (currently sent to Quest Diagnostics). The remaining specimen will be processed for cytologic evaluation. Submit the specimen FRESH, WITHOUT FIXATIVE, in an appropriately labeled container to LMC along with the completed request form. If transport will be delayed, the specimen should be refrigerated until transport to the lab.