

SHIPMENT OF SPECIMENS FOR RABIES DIAGNOSIS

Materials

- Insulated Styrofoam shipping container with a cardboard box exterior, which is in excellent condition. Do not use boxes that are worn, torn, or water marked.
- Plastic mailing tape, address labels, UN3373 “Biological Substance, Category B” label, Rabies Submission Form (DD Form 2620), two heavy plastic bags (zip-lock), gel packs, and packing material such as newspaper.

Collection

- Wild or stray animals that bite a human or other animal must always be euthanized immediately and its head sent to the laboratory for examination. The entire carcass of small animals such as bats should be sent to the laboratory.
- Animal heads or small carcass must be fresh. If brain tissue is decomposed or rotten, then analysis may not be possible or results may be inconclusive.
- Caged rodent pets (hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, mice) should not be submitted for rabies testing.

Packaging and Shipping Biological Substances, Category B

- The packaging and shipping of rabies specimens to the laboratory for diagnostic testing was developed to comply with the recently revised regulations in 49 CFR parts 171 to 173. The new proper shipping term is “Biological Substance, Category B.” The diamond-shaped “UN-3373” label must be placed on the shipping box.
- Place specimen in a primary heavy plastic bag, seal it, place in a second heavy plastic bag, and seal it.
- Pack specimen in an insulated shipping container with packing material to fill the container and with sufficient gel packs to maintain the specimen cold until it arrives at the laboratory. It is imperative that no liquid leak from the shipping container during shipment. Dry ice is NOT to be used as a refrigerant per warnings from the Commercial Airline Carriers Association.
- Ship by overnight or next day delivery utilizing Federal Express, DHL, or UPS. Do NOT use the United States Postal Service (USPS) because they do not deliver directly to the laboratory.
- Complete Section I (Submitter Information) and Section II (Animal Information) on the DD Form 2620. Place the form in an envelope or plastic bag and affix it to the Styrofoam lid between the inner and outer containers.
- Animal heads for diagnosis of rabies infection are considered “Biological Substance, Category B” for transportation purposes by Title 49 CFR parts 171.134.
- If shipping a specimen from outside CONUS, please contact the laboratory by calling (210) 295-4604, FAX (210) 295-4612 or e-mail to USARMY.JBSA.MEDCOM.LIST.PHC-RABIES-FAVN-SA@MAIL.MIL with the shipping information so we can assist in tracking the shipment. |