

To the Editors:

Collection and transport of urine for culture

I write this in response to the letter by S P Lamabodusuriya, Professor and Head, Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo (1).

In our laboratory, urine for culture (in children and adults) is collected in a sterile container (sterilised by autoclaving). Written instructions regarding techniques of collection, transport times etc, are handed to the patient along with the container (2). Samples collected in the out-stations are kept in the refrigerator after collection at the collecting centre, and transported to the laboratory in a 'cool box' containing ice packs. Specific instructions for collection of urine from patients with indwelling catheters are given on request by telephone. Trained technicians are also available to collect such samples on the mobile service.

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I would also like to suggest that doctors instruct the patient (or patients), to collect urine for culture before commencing treatment with antimicrobial agents, to prevent inhibition of growth of causative bacteria on culture media.

References

1. Lamabodusuriya SP. Urinary tract infection in children; collection and transport of urine, and colony counts. *Ceylon Medical Journal* 2000; 45: 135.
2. Murray PR, Baron EJ, Pfaller MA, Tenover FC, Tenover RH. *Manual of clinical microbiology*. 6th ed. Washington: ASM Publishers and Distributors, 1995.