

# Sputum Collection Instructions for Tuberculosis Diagnosis

**Sputum testing is the best way to diagnose tuberculosis and it's also important during treatment to ensure that medications are working properly**

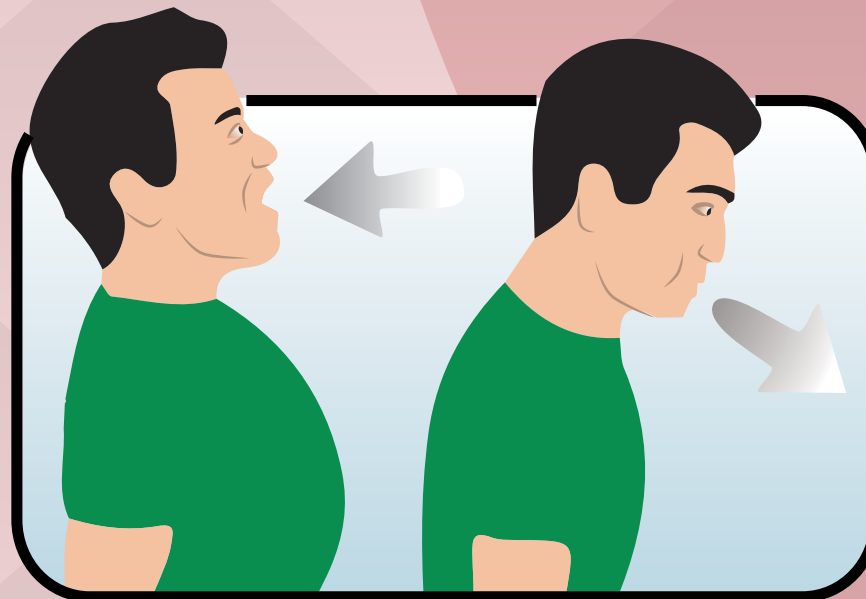
**1** The laboratory technician or health worker will give you a special plastic cup to collect the sputum sample. Do not open it until you are ready to use it.



**2** Go to the sputum collection area you are directed to by the healthcare worker. This area should be outside or in a special area with negative air flow. If you were asked to collect the sample at home, go to an outside area or open the windows.

**3** It is preferable to give sputum in the morning before eating or drinking.

**4** Take a few deep breaths and slowly exhale while holding your hand gently on your stomach. When it comes to coughing, you should inhale deeply and then cough firmly until some sputum appears in your mouth.

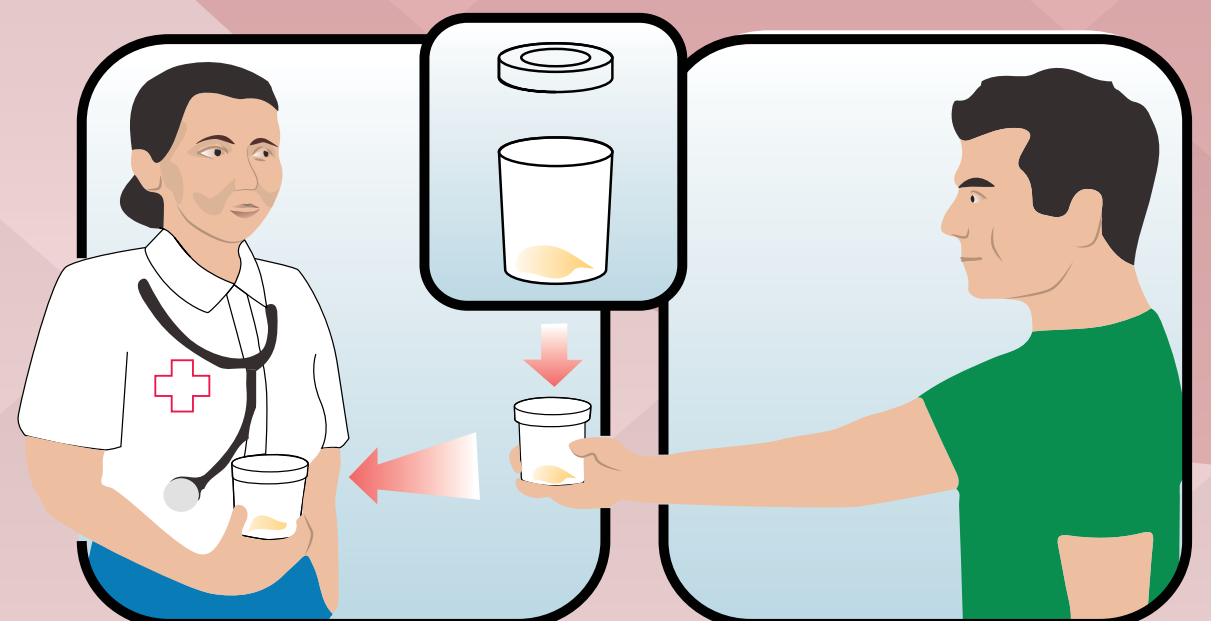


**5** Once the sputum is in your mouth, release it into the container provided by the healthcare worker.



**6** Repeat what you are doing until the sputum reaches the line indicated by the lab technician on the plastic cup.

**7** Give the sputum container to the lab technician to check for quality. He/ She will examine it to make sure you have provided a good quality and sufficient quantity.



**8** If the sputum is of low quality (sample too small or clear), you will be asked to try to produce the sputum again.

You have to take deep coughs to produce sputum from the inside of your lungs. Sputum that comes out of your lungs is thick and sticky. Saliva that comes out of your mouth is liquid and clear. Do not collect saliva.



If you were unable to produce sputum, the healthcare worker may assist you by patting you on the back. Stretching or running for few minutes could also be helpful.