



Proficiency Test Handling Reminders: Testing Personnel

DO

Identify Suspect PT Samples:

Samples should be considered Suspect PT when:

- The words “Proficiency” or “Survey” appear on the specimen label, requisition or any other document received with the test order.
- Any of the acronyms defined on the Suspect Proficiency Samples poster appear on the specimen label, requisition or any other document received with the test order.
- The sample appears to be a commercially prepared product or has the physical characteristics compatible with the consistency of an active PT survey sample.
- You are in the process of participating in a PT survey with a similar name or sample type.
- Survey Kit Instructions, a PT Submission Packet, Proficiency Attestation form or a Survey Result form accompanies the sample and it is not from your QA department.

DO

Test PT Samples when received from your laboratory’s QA Department:

Treat PT samples the same as patient samples:

- PT samples must be examined, handled, and tested along with the laboratory’s regular workload of patient samples.
- Testing personnel must follow the technical SOP including acceptable repeat criteria to test PT samples.

DO NOT

Refer PT material to another laboratory:

Reflex PT to tests that are not performed within the Four Walls of the testing laboratory:

- No portion of a PT sample may be referred to another laboratory even if the testing is temporarily unavailable.
- Any testing or interpretation that would be referred to an outside laboratory for patients **must not** be referred for PT.
- Ensure PT Samples NEVER leave the **Four Walls of the Laboratory** – for any reason

DO NOT

Communicate about PT sample(s) or their results with ANY laboratory (within our network of labs OR outside of Quest Diagnostics) until after formal evaluation by the PT provider:

- Questions regarding the administration of the PT program or material integrity should be directed to your Laboratory Director or QA Department.
- Communication or discussion with other laboratories concerning PT results is strictly prohibited.
- If another laboratory initiates communication regarding PT results before the survey has been evaluated, laboratory staff must immediately notify their Laboratory Director or other laboratory management. **DO NOT** discuss an active PT survey with another laboratory.

DO NOT

Accept PT material from another laboratory:

- If the laboratory receives PT material from another laboratory, sequester the material and **do not test**. Immediately notify the Laboratory Director or QA Department to facilitate investigation of the suspect PT.

