Dear Doctor,

Following a recent audit, we observed that Semen Samples received by post leak, meaning that the sample is unsuitable for testing. In the audit we observed that most samples received by post are not fulfilling the correct postage and packaging regulations.

These sample types are classed as category B biological substances and should therefore be packaged according to UN3373 regulations.

Example of triple packaging materials that may be used to comply with Category B infectious substances is:



Ref: <https://www.who.int/ihr/publications/WHO-WHE-CPI-2019.20/en/>

1. The primary receptacle, containing the infectious substance, must be watertight and impermeable to the substance held within. The primary receptacle should be appropriately labelled as to its contents. e.g.: Sample Container
2. A second, watertight and leakproof or sift proof packaging is used to enclose and protect the primary receptacle and should contain absorbent material to collect any leakage. e.g.: Biohazard bag.
3. A third, outer layer of packaging is used to protect the secondary packaging from physical damage while in transit. Hence, this layer must be of an appropriate strength for the weight, size and composition of the inner packages, to ensure that those packages are protected. The smallest external dimension must be at least 100 mm. Specimen request form should be placed between the secondary packaging and outer layers of packaging.

e.g.: Cardboard box.

To this end, we would appreciate that all Semen samples would be packaged according to the regulations; otherwise the sample will be rejected by the laboratory. Alternatively, samples can be brought to the lab in person Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. If patients would prefer, we can provide a private room on-site where the sample can be produced and delivered to the lab once complete. However, it is important to note that this room must be booked by appointment only (01 8171739).

To facilitate referral of Semen samples, please find correct address attached along with the correct UN3373 label. From the 1st of April 2020 we can no longer accept samples received in the post that does not fulfil the packaging regulations.

If you have any further queries please don’t hesitate to ask or alternatively visit our website at <https://rotunda.ie/laboratory-medicine/>

Kind Regards

David Le Blanc

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**UN3373**

**BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE**

**CATEGORY B**

**Senders address: Should be GP or Clinic and NOT Home address**