

## **Collection and shipping instructions**

### **Critical Instructions, please read carefully**

1. Tubes must be between 17°C and 25°C at the time of blood filling.
2. As 1 mL tubes draw blood relatively slowly, keep the tube on the needle for two to three seconds once the tube appears to have completed filling to ensure that the correct volume is drawn (critical for accurate analysis)
3. The black mark on the side of the tubes indicates the 1mL fill volume. The blood collection tubes are manufactured to draw 1 mL  $\pm$ 10% and perform optimally within the range of 0.8 to 1.2 mL. If the level of blood in any tube is not close to the indicator line, it is recommended that another blood sample be collected using a syringe and 1mL transferred to each of the four tubes. For safety reasons, this is best performed by removing the syringe needle, while ensuring appropriate safety procedures, removing the caps from the four QFT-Gold Plus tubes, and adding 1 mL of blood to each (to the black mark on the side of the tube label). Replace the tube caps securely and mix as described in step 2 below. Under- or over-filling the tubes outside of the 0.8 to 1.2 mL range may lead to erroneous results.
4. If a “butterfly needle” is being used to collect blood, a “purge” tube should be used to ensure that the tubing is filled with blood prior to the QuantiFERON<sup>®</sup>-TB Gold Plus tubes being used.
5. Immediately after filling tubes, gently invert tubes 10 times to ensure that the entire inner surface of the tube is coated with blood to solubilize antigens on tube walls.

NOTE: Over energetic shaking may cause gel disruption and could lead to aberrant results.

### **Incubation (by RHA microbiology laboratory)**

1. Place tubes UPRIGHT in a 37°C incubator within 16 hours of collection. The incubator does not require CO<sub>2</sub> or humidification. Specimens must be incubated for 16-24 hours before centrifugation.

**Note:** If the blood is not incubated immediately after collection, remixing of the tubes by inverting 10 times must be performed immediately prior to incubation.

### **Post Incubation**

1. After incubating at 37°C, centrifuge tubes for 15 minutes at 2,000–3,000 RCF (g). If the gel plug does not move to separate the cells from the plasma (as may be evident with refrigerated tubes), the tubes should be recentrifuged at a higher speed.
2. If the tubes are not to be centrifuged immediately after incubation, specimens may be stored between 2–27°C for up to three days pre-centrifugation.

**Note:** All tubes MUST be centrifuged before being sent to PHML.

3. After centrifugation, the plasma can be stored in original collection tube and ship to PHML at 2–8°C. Plasma can be held up to 28 days at 2–8°C.