

Specimen Handling: Respiratory Specimens



Overview/Background

In this scenario, the learner will demonstrate standard precautions when handling specimens. The learner will assess and sort human respiratory specimens for processing.

Objectives

Demonstrate standard precautions when handling specimens

Demonstrate safe laboratory work practices

Gameplay Flow

1. Scenario intro
2. Disinfect work area
3. Place absorbent bench liner on the benchtop
4. Retrieve pneumatic tube
5. Remove specimens from the pneumatic tube
6. Place specimens on the absorbent bench liner
7. Check the pneumatic tube for debris and leakage
8. Check specimen for damage or leakage
9. Match specimen label information to requisition
10. Place specimens in the appropriate bin
11. Place testing bin on the cart



Disclaimer: This scenario highlights key elements for safe and effective laboratory work practices but was not designed to provide laboratory-specific applications. Please refer to your supervisor and your laboratory's standard operating procedures (SOPs) for detailed guidance and site-specific recommendations on equipment, location, and processes. Use of trade names and commercial sources in this training activity is for identification only and does not imply CDC endorsement.

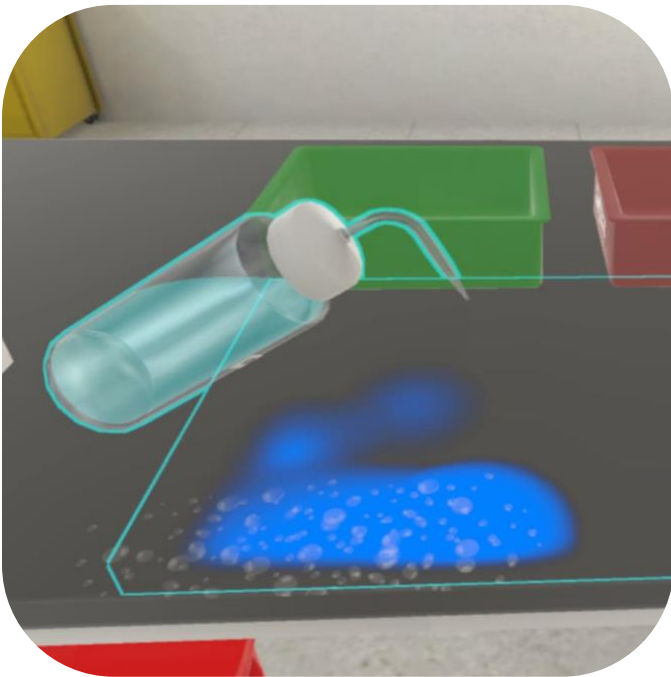
Scenario Intro

Introduction: Good work practices are essential to minimize the risk of exposure to human pathogens when handling blood, or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Proper handling of clinical specimens is necessary to maintain their integrity and reduce the likelihood and severity of laboratory-acquired infections. In this scenario, you will demonstrate the safe handling of urine, blood or respiratory specimens. Always follow your laboratory's SOP and risk assessment.

Task: In this scenario, the learner will demonstrate standard precautions when handling respiratory specimens. The learner will assess and sort human respiratory specimens for processing.

Personal Protective Equipment: laboratory coat, safety glasses, and nitrile gloves.

Step 1: Prior to handling specimens, you must disinfect your work area. Apply an EPA-registered disinfectant to the benchtop in a circular motion.



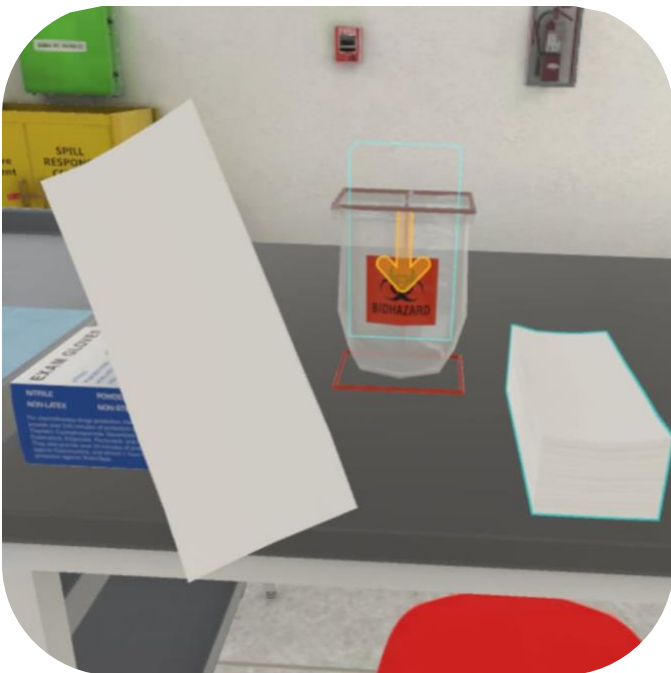
Note: To properly disinfect the work area, you must apply the disinfectant in a circular motion.

Step 2: After the disinfectant's recommended contact time, use a paper towel to wipe the benchtop in a circular motion.



Note: After the recommended contact time – to properly disinfect the work area, you must wipe up the disinfectant in a circular motion. Do not repeat wiping the same area unless additional disinfectant is applied with a new paper towel.

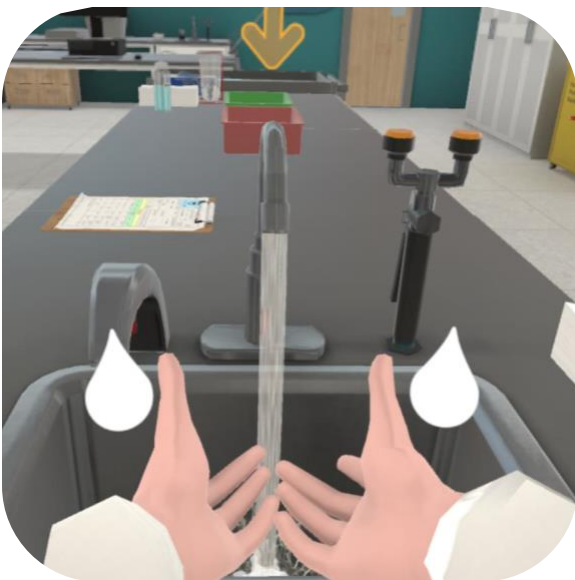
Step 3: Dispose of the paper towel in the benchtop biohazard waste container.



Step 4: Remove your gloves and place them in the benchtop biohazard waste container.



Step 5: Wash, and dry your hands, and dispose of the paper towel in the non-biohazard waste container.

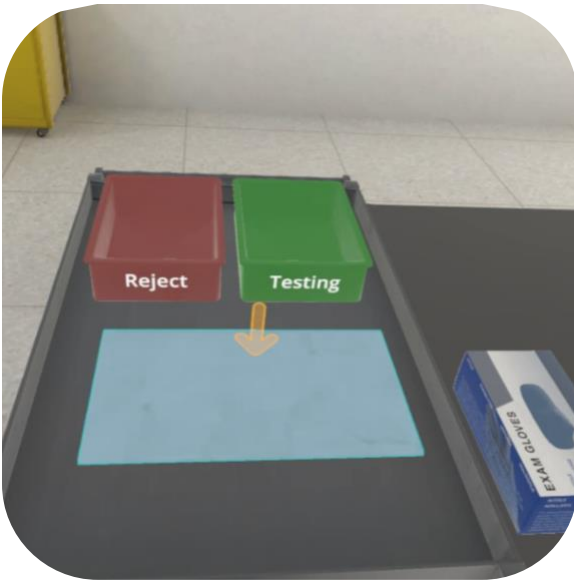


Note: Remember, paper towels from washing your hands belong in the non-biohazard waste container.

Step 6: Go to the benchtop and don a new pair of gloves.



Step 7: Place an absorbent bench liner on the benchtop.



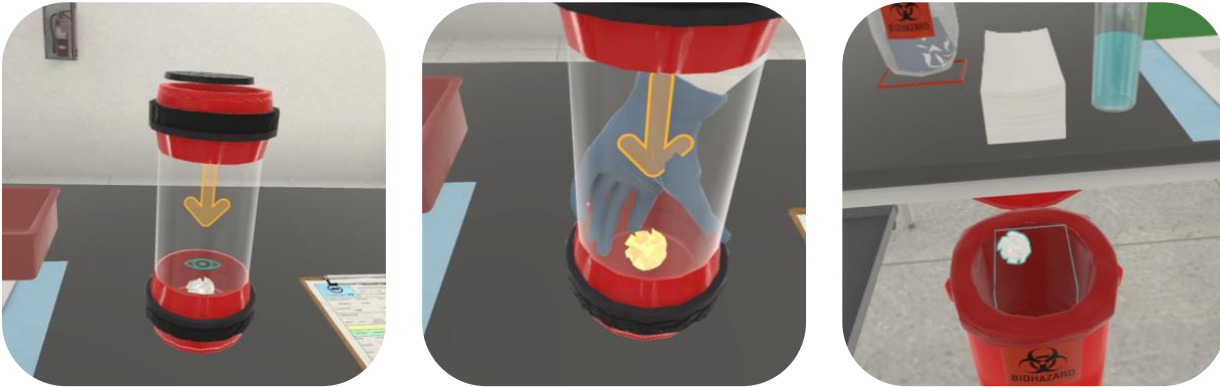
Step 8: Retrieve the pneumatic tube and place it on the benchtop.



Step 9: Open the pneumatic tube, remove the specimens, and place them on the absorbent bench liner on the benchtop.

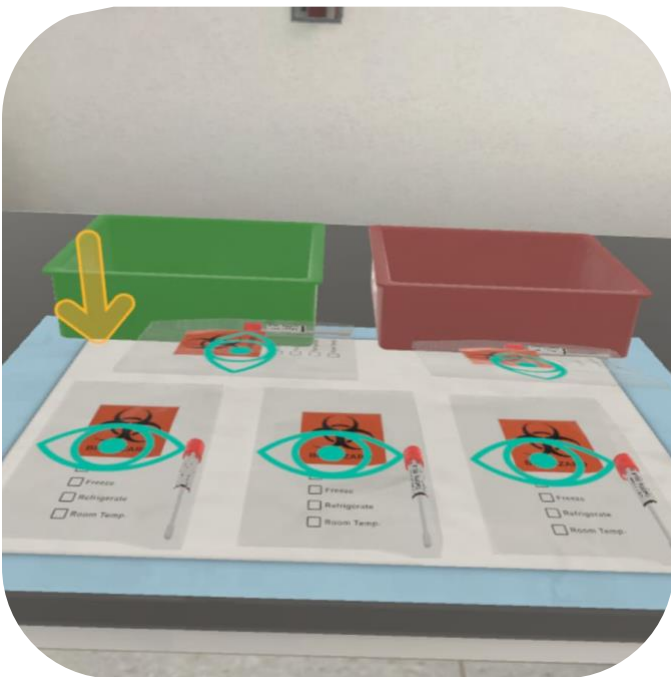


Step 10: Next, check the pneumatic tube to ensure no debris or leakage from specimens.



Note: If debris is in the pneumatic tube, remove the debris and place it in the non-biohazard waste container. If the specimen leaked, the pneumatic tube must be disinfected, and the specimen will need to be rejected.

Step 11: Move to the benchtop. Check each respiratory specimen to see if the tube is damaged or if the swab is visibly contaminated. If a specimen is damaged or visibly contaminated, place it in the reject bin. Place suitable specimens back on the benchtop.



Step 12: Check each respiratory specimen label to ensure it is legible and matches the requisition form. If the specimen label is not legible or does not match the requisition form, place the specimen in the reject bin. Specimens suitable for processing should be placed in the testing bin.



Step 13: Place the specimen bin on the cart to be taken to Molecular Biology.

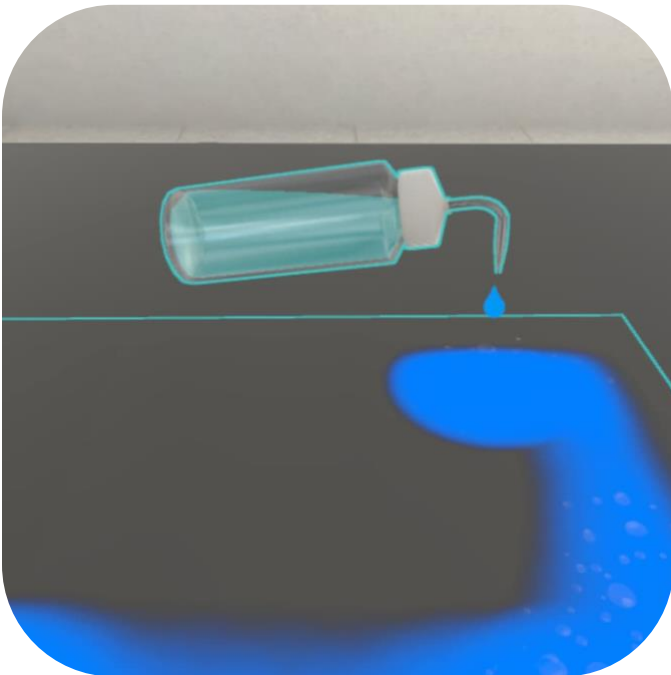


Step 14: Next, gently fold the absorbent bench liner inward and place it in the biohazard waste container on the floor.



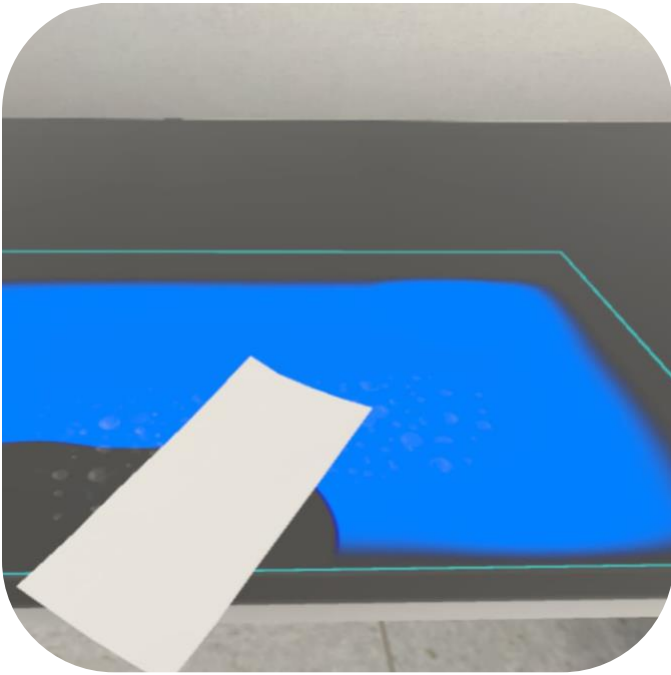
Caution: Do not place the absorbent bench liner in a non-biohazard waste container. The liner is potentially contaminated and must be disposed of in the biohazard waste can.

Step 15: Apply the disinfectant to the benchtop in a circular motion, working from the outside area toward the center.



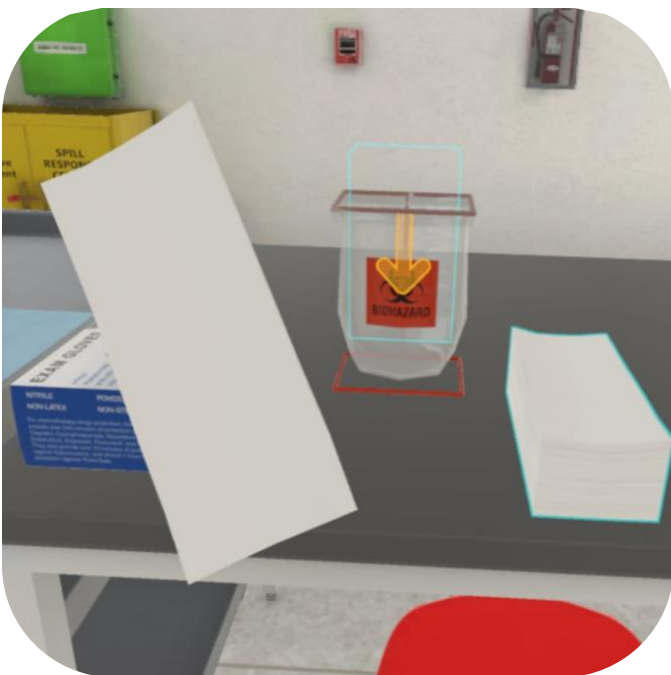
Note: To properly decontaminate the work area, you must apply the disinfectant in a circular motion.

Step 16: Using a paper towel, wipe the benchtop in a circular motion working from the outside toward the center.



Note: After the recommended contact time – to properly disinfect the work area, you must wipe up the disinfectant in a circular motion working from the outside toward the center.

Step 17: Dispose of the paper towel in the benchtop biohazard waste container.



Step 18: Remove your gloves and place them in the benchtop biohazard waste container.



Step 19: Next, wash your hands, and dispose of the paper towel in the non-biohazard waste container.



Note: Paper towels from washing your hands belong in the non-biohazard waste container. Do not place them in the biohazard waste container.

Complete: Congratulations! You have successfully sorted the blood specimens for processing. You have completed the Specimen Handling: Respiratory Specimens scenario.

Scenario References and Acknowledgements

All content in this scenario was taken from the following references.

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9. Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) "Clinical laboratory preparedness and response guide," 2016; <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/49331>

Scenario Design by:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Office of Laboratory Systems and Response (OLSR)
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Training and Workforce Development Branch (TWDB)

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