

Blood Sampling (FTA Cards)

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How to collect blood samples using FTA® cards.

Always wash your hands or use clean gloves. Allow blood samples to dry completely before shipping, but do not dry them in direct sunlight or in a plastic bag. When collecting blood, use a new needle, syringe or pin prick device for each animal. When collecting, packaging and submitting samples for DNA testing, it is critical to eliminate cross-contamination. Rinsing needles is not enough to prevent possible DNA residue. Please follow these simple steps to improve accuracy of test results:

1. Verify the animal's tattoo and/or tag number and clearly record it on the FTA card in the space provided. This ID will be used for reporting results, so it's important to double-check it for accuracy.
2. Using a new needle or piercing device for each animal, prick a vein in the animal's ear. As blood forms at the site of the prick, open the FTA card and touch it to the drop on the indicated circle. Next, bend the top flap of the card up so that the sample dries while the card is in an open position. A syringe may also be used to collect and spot the FTA cards.
3. Apply only enough blood to the card to fill the circle outlined, but not so much that the card is soggy and overly saturated. Two or three heavy drops of blood is plenty.
4. Set the FTA card aside with the top flap open until dry. Make sure that FTA cards do not touch—this is a possible source of DNA cross-contamination. Also, do not dry FTA cards in direct sunlight, as UV radiation destroys DNA.
5. Once dry, rubber band closed FTA cards together in batches of 10 – 15 and combine several batches together into resealable plastic storage bags.
6. Record the Animal ID along with other animal information on the Sample Information Form, such that each sample can be correctly matched with each animal. Barcodes are assigned to the samples upon arrival in the lab. Samples may be shipped by regular or express mail to Pfizer Animal Genetics.

