

*VALLEYCARE*  
**OLIVE VIEW-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER/HEALTH CENTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE  
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**NUMBER: 3270  
VERSION: 1**

**SUBJECT/TITLE: COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS RESULTING FROM VIOLENT OR CRIMINAL ACTION**

**POLICY:** Preservation of specimens in chain of evidence.

**PURPOSE:** To maintain chain of evidence.

**DEPARTMENTS: DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE (DEM)**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**PROCEDURE:** Specimens, i.e., bullets or foreign objects that are obtained from the body of a person that is a victim of a violent action are to be collected in the following manner:

1. Immediately after removal, the object is to be placed in an appropriate container (envelope or sterile plastic cup with lid) being careful not to damage or alter the object.
2. The envelope is to be labeled with patient's name, data, time, physician who removed the object, area object was taken from and name of person who placed object in container.
3. The above information is to be documented on medical treatment record in the nurses' notes and the physician will also document the same. All individuals present when object is removed must clearly be identified on medical treatment record.
4. The law enforcement agency collecting the specimens from the Department of Emergency Medicine will sign chart and this will be documented also.
5. These specimens will not be sent to our laboratory. They will be kept by law enforcement agency for evidence purposes.
6. The chain of evidence must be maintained by being able to account for the transfer of the foreign body form the patient to the law enforcement agency

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without leaving an identified individual's hands except for being placed in a locked box storage area for these purposes.

7. If the Department of Emergency Medicine physician feels a hospital pathology report is indicated, he/she will request a pathologist to be called in to be present at the time of removal.
8. When possible, the representative from the law enforcement agency should be present in the room during the removal of the foreign body.
9. All items of evidence including laboratory specimens shall be clearly labeled as to the identity of the source and the identity of the person collecting them. If more than one person handles the evidence, the evidence will have a form attached, which documents its chain of custody and shall be properly labeled. The evidence will be turned over to the proper law enforcement agency. Person collecting evidence shall document on the patient record the following:
  - a. Name of person who collected evidence.
  - b. Name of person who gave evidence to Police Officer.
  - c. Name of Police Officer, Badge Number and Division of Law Enforcement agency.
  - d. If necessary, copy of chain of custody shall be placed on patient record. See A-21.
10. In the event that any evidentiary material collected during the course of an examination is unable to be immediately given to appropriate law enforcement personnel, the following procedures will be used.
  - a. The licensed nurse who was present during the entire examination/evidence collection process will hand carry all evidence collected to the charge nurse and obtain the key for the evidence collection cabinet.
  - b. The same licensed nurse will then place all evidence collected into the evidence collection cabinet and ensure that the cabinet is fully locked.
  - c. After ensuring that the evidence collection cabinet is appropriately locked the nurse shall remove the key from the charge nurse key ring and keep it in their possession until such time that appropriate

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law enforcement personnel arrive to collect and sign for the evidence.

- d. At no time will the chain of evidence be broken or the key given to another person until appropriate law enforcement personnel arrive to collect/sign for the evidence.

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| References:   |                        |
| Approved by: David Talan (Chief Physician), Jeanne Egusa (Nurse Manager), Vena Ricketts (DEM PI/QI Coordinator) | Date: 06/20/2011       |
| Review Date: 12/95, 4/97, 11/00, 3/03, 2/11, <b>06/20/2014</b>  | Revision Date: 1/14/08 |
| Distribution: Emergency Medicine  |                        |
| Original Date: 1/89, 06/20/2011   |                        |