

## NAIL COLLECTION PROTOCOL

1. The Collector should have the following tools and supplies on hand prior to beginning the nail specimen collection:
  - a. Nail clippers
  - b. Sharp clean scissors
  - c. Alcohol swabs
  - d. Non-acetone nail polish remover
  - e. Nail Collection Kit
  - f. Chain-of-Custody form (COC)
  - g. Transport bag
  - h. Courier/shipping envelope
2. The Collector must thoroughly clean the nail clippers and scissors by rubbing them with an alcohol swab, observed by the Donor.
3. The Donor's nails (fingernails or toenails) must be clean of all polish, dirt and debris. If the Donor has artificial nails, they will need to have them removed prior to the test. Do not attempt to remove these nails as it could damage the nail bed. If you remove the nail polish, make sure to have the Donor wash their hands thoroughly to remove the nail polish remover. Use non-acetone polish remover.
4. Clip Donor's nails from all fingers or all toes onto clean paper. Clip the nail halfway across the nail, and then peel the nail the rest of the way to keep the nail from "popping" off and getting lost in an unclean area.
5. The Collector must then use a clean pair of scissors and scrape the surface of the nail to collect shavings from the nail surface. Hold the scissors at a 33 degree angle and scrape from cuticle to the tip. Use a quick scraping motion and make sure not to scrape too deeply to prevent injury to the client. The Collector must collect the scrapings from the entire nail surface of all ten (10) fingernails or toenails with the nail clippings and place in the foil pouch contained in the Nail Collection Kit.
6. Fold and close the foil pouch around the nail sample and place it inside the Nail Collection Kit.
7. Ask the Donor to print his or her full name and social security/I.D. number, as well as initial the certification, in the appropriate blanks listed on the Nail Collection Kit flap.
8. The Donor and Collector must initial the tamper-proof seal once it has been placed over the edge of the Nail Collection Kit.
9. The Collector must fully complete the chain-of-custody ("COC") form with both the Donor's and Collector's information, as requested. The Collector must identify what toxicology test is being performed on the nail specimen on the COC form. *The Donor's social security/I.D. number on both the COC and Nail Collection Kit envelope must match.*
10. Place the completed COC form and the sealed Nail Collection Kit into the plastic transport bag, then a courier envelope. Seal each respectively and ship it immediately to ExperTox for testing.

Note: If the client is a diabetic it would not be prudent to do their toenails. It is recommended that diabetics only have their toenails clipped by professionals such as a Podiatrist. There is greater chance of infection and injury clipping the toenails of diabetic Donor. Improper nail care and or injury to the nail in diabetics can lead to infection, gangrene and loss of digits or limb.

This protocol is also available at [www.expertox.com](http://www.expertox.com)

**Drugs and Toxins get deposited into the nails through the blood stream after the substances are ingested. The drug/toxin ingested will metabolize and can generally be identified in the nail tissue up to 4 to 6 months after ingestion, based on average growth rate.**