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specimen

in analytical chemistry

A specifically selected portion of a material taken from a dynamic system and assumed to be representative of the parent material at the time it is taken. Although the specimen may not be reproducible in time, e.g. it may be taken from a flowing stream or a portion of blood, no separable sampling error exists since this error is unavoidably included with the corresponding error of the estimate of the property, function or analyte being studied. A specimen may be considered as a special type of sample, taken primarily in time rather than in space. The term 'specimen' has been used both as a representative unit and as a nonrepresentative (often better than most) unit of a population, usually in clinical, biological and mineralogical collections. 'Collections' in this case is used as either a noun or verb. This usage is almost always self-evident, and thus would not be confused with a time-type sample.

Source:

PAC, 1990, *62*, 1193 *(Nomenclature for sampling in analytical chemistry (Recommendations 1990))* on page 1202

