

Division of Laboratory Medicine

Bacteriology

Nose Swab

Nasal colonisation with *Staphylococcus aureus* increases the risk of staphylococcal infections at other sites of the body such as postoperative wounds and dialysis access sites. Single organism nasal screens for *Staphylococcus aureus* may be requested as part of a PVL outbreak as part of a IPC investigation. For *Bordetella pertussis* investigation please see Pernalasal Swab: <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/other-departments/laboratory-medicine/manchester-medical-microbiology-partnership/repertoire-of-tests/#pernasal>

General information

Collection container (including preservatives): Collect specimens in appropriate CE marked leak proof containers and transport specimens in sealed plastic bags.

Collect using liquid eSwabs and transport in sealed plastic bags.

Specimen type: Nose Swab

Collection: Collect specimens before antimicrobial therapy where possible. Plain sterile cotton wool swab. Sample the anterior nares by gently rotating the swab over the mucosal surface.

Unless otherwise stated, swabs for bacterial and fungal culture should be taken with a liquid eSwab

Liquid eSwabs contain 1ml of liquid. No liquid should be discarded when collecting sample. Samples with insufficient liquid will be discarded.

Specimen transport: Specimens should be transported and processed as soon as possible. If processing is delayed, refrigeration is preferable to storage at ambient temperature. Delays of over 48hr are undesirable.

Minimum volume of sample: 1ml. Liquid eSwabs contain 1ml of liquid. No liquid should be discarded when collecting sample. Samples with insufficient liquid will be discarded

Laboratory information

Measurement units: Not applicable

Biological reference units: Not applicable

Turnaround time for provisional result (working days): 2 days

Turnaround time to final result (working days): 2-3 days

Clinical information

Clinical decision points: Not applicable

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Factors known to significantly affect the results: Special considerations to minimise deterioration
If processing is delayed, refrigeration is preferable to storage at ambient temperature. Delays of over 48hr
are undesirable.

Limitations:

Nasal swabs should not be taken to investigate the presence of *Bordetella pertussis*.

(Last updated August 2019)