

## Division of Laboratory Medicine

### Bacteriology

# Throat Swab for Culture

## 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:** Swab

**Collection:** Throat swab taken from the tonsillar area and/or posterior pharynx, should be taken avoiding the tongue and uvula.

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.

**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

**Special precautions:** Fastidious anaerobes, such as *Fusobacterium necrophorum*, will not be recovered from samples that are delayed.

When Diphtheria is suspected, advice from a Consultant Microbiologist should be sought prior to sample submission.

Scarlet fever presentations should be noted on the request form as they are notifiable.

Pharyngeal swabs for *N.meningitidis* carriage should be clearly labelled.

Pharyngeal swabs for *N.gonorrhoeae* carriage are not advised; inoculation directly onto culture media at the time of collection within a GUM clinic is recommended.

## Laboratory information

**Measurement units:** Not applicable

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**Biological reference units:** Not applicable

**Turnaround time for provisional result (working days):** 1 day

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

### Clinical information

**Clinical decision points:** Not applicable

**Factors known to significantly affect the results:** Collect specimens before antimicrobial therapy where possible

**(Last updated August 2019)**