Fungal culture – wound specimens

Wound swabs, exudates and pus.

General information

Turnaround time:

Culture result (species detected or negative) is provided as soon as growth is detected and identified. Generally, preliminary results are available by 14 days, but culture of some specimens may be extended up to 4 weeks.

Susceptibility test turnaround times depend on when the culture is available for testing. Typically, this is an additional 3-5 days.

Sample type/container:

Swabs:



Collect with liquid eSwab and transport in sealed plastic bags.

Specimens other than swabs:



Collect into appropriate UKCA/CE-marked sterile leakproof containers and transport in sealed plastic bags.

Transportation

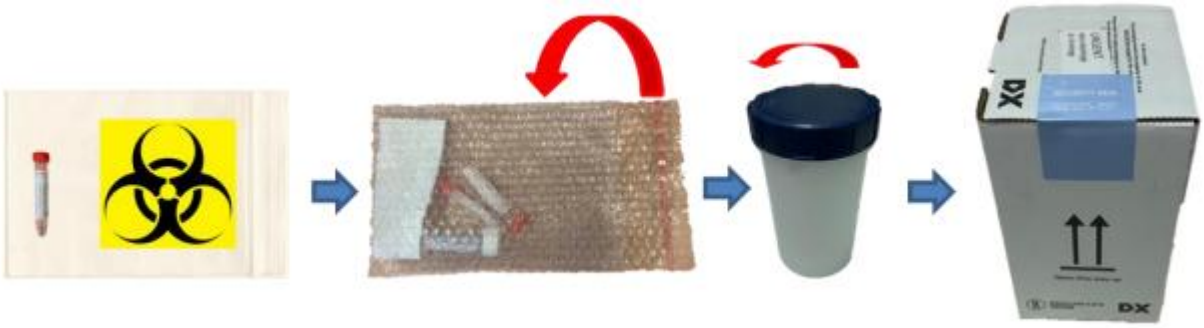
- Samples should be placed into a plastic Ziploc bag, sealed, and then placed into another sealed plastic Ziploc bag (preferably with a biohazard label on the outside), as shown below.



- Category B transport boxes or an appropriate transport bag (i.e., one which adheres to regulations governing the transportation of diagnostic specimens) must be used for transport by road or between

Manchester University Foundation Trust sites (but are not necessary within Wythenshawe hospital grounds).

- Please see below for packaging requirements.



For more information - https://mrcm.org.uk/sample-collection/

Laboratory Information

Biological interval/clinical decision values: N/A

Clinical Information

Collect specimens before antifungal therapy is started, where possible. Provide details about any ongoing or recent antifungal therapy.

Swabs for fungal culture should be taken using a liquid eSwab.
Samples of pus/exudate, if present, are preferred to swabs.

Use aseptic technique.

Clean the wound gently with sterile water or saline before sampling, then collect the sample from a representative (inflamed) part of the wound. Swabbing dry crusted areas is unlikely to yield the causative pathogen.

If specimens are taken from ulcers, the debris on the ulcer should be removed using saline.
If only a small amount of pus or exudate is available, it is preferable to send a pus/exudate swab in transport medium to minimise the risk of desiccation during 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 48 hours may result in overgrowth of some fungi inhibiting the growth or masking the presence of others.

(Last updated May 2026)