



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES



**CHLAMYDIA TRACHOMATIS CULTURE**  
**SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT KIT**

**\*\***As soon as it has been determined that a specimen will be submitted for chlamydia culture, please notify the Public Health Laboratories (PHL) Virology/Special Testing Unit at 271-4620 or 1-800-852-3345 ext. 4620 so that availability of necessary reagents can be assured. Also, any questions concerning specimen collection or handling or the process of ordering kits may be addressed.

Procedure for collection:

1. Verify that the Universal Transport Media (UTM) has not expired. Results obtained from specimens received in expired media may not accurately reflect patient condition.
2. Identify the patient. Label the UTM transport media with patient name, specimen source and the date of collection.
3. Fill out the PHL test requisition form completely and legibly. **If medicolegal case, please indicate.**
4. Collect the specimens under the following conditions for optimal laboratory results:
  - **DO NOT** use swabs with calcium alginate or wood shafts.
  - It is imperative that samples be collected from the involved epithelial cell sites by vigorous swabbing or scraping. Purulent discharges are inadequate and should be cleaned from the site prior to sampling.
  - Appropriate collection sites include: the cervix, the anterior urethra, the conjunctiva, rectal mucosa, the nasopharynx, and the throat. For other sites, please call the PHL for collection instructions.
5. Follow the instructions below for the specific site of specimen collection:

*Cervical swab:*

Visualize the cervix using a speculum without lubricant. Remove mucous and secretions from the cervix with a sterile polyester swab and discard the swab. With a second sterile polyester swab, sample the endocervical canal.

*Urethral swab:*

Insert a wire shaft polyester tipped swab 2 to 4 cm into the urethral lumen. Rotate the swab and leave it in place for at least 2 seconds to facilitate absorption.

*Conjunctival (ocular) swab:*

If pus or discharge is present, clean the area with a plastic shaft polyester swab being careful not to scrape the conjunctiva. Discard the swab. With a wire shaft polyester tipped swab, thoroughly swab the lower, then upper, conjunctiva 2-3 times.

*Nasopharyngeal swab:*

With the patient's neck in an extended position, gently insert a sterile wire shaft polyester tipped swab into a nostril. Pass the swab along the floor of the nose until it contacts the posterior nasopharyngeal wall and gently rotate for 5 seconds to absorb secretions. Remove the swab.

*Throat swab:*

Depress the tongue gently with a tongue depressor. Sweep a polyester swab back and forth across the posterior pharynx, tonsillar area and any inflamed or ulcerated areas. Avoid cheeks, teeth, etc..

*Rectal swab:*

Carefully insert a polyester swab approximately 1 inch beyond the anal sphincter and gently rotate the swab. Swabs contaminated with fecal material should be discarded and a second specimen obtained.

6. **Immediately** place the swab into the UTM transport media tube provided; aseptically break off or cut the applicator leaving the tip in the vial. Cap the tube. To help prevent leaking, wrap a piece of parafilm around the outside of the UTM tube and cap. Seal the tube of UTM media into the resealable bag provided.
7. Specimens should be refrigerated (2-8°C) as soon as possible after collecting.
8. Keep specimen cold during transportation. Place the specimen in the aluminum liner with the freezer pack provided in the kit. Cap the liner. Wrap the completed PHL test requisition form around the outside of the inner liner and place into the cardboard mailing container. Cap the mailing container.
9. Transport to the PHL within 24 hours. Refrigerator temperature is best for short-term storage. Results from specimens received greater than 24 hrs from date of collection may not accurately reflect patient condition.

Kit components:

1. Cardboard outer mailing container
2. Cylindrical aluminum liner
3. Cold pack
4. UTM transport media
5. 1 wire and 2 plastic shaft polyester swabs
6. Plastic zipper lock bag
7. Parafilm
8. PHL test requisition form

Revised 2/7/06 WDL  
2/14/08 SHM