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Subject:	COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT OF GENITAL SPECIMENS FOR CULTURE				
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COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT OF GENITAL SPECIMENS FOR CULTURE

Female

Amniotic fluid

Aspirate fluid by catheter, at cesarean section, or at amniocentesis. Collect specimen into sterile screw cap container and transport to the microbiology immediately.

Bartholin gland

Decontaminate the skin with povidone-iodine, and aspirate material from the duct(s). Transfer specimen to a sterile transport device suitable to support aerobic and anaerobic organisms.

Cervix

Use a culturette swab with a transport medium soaked pellet.

1. Do not use lubricant during procedure.
2. Wipe the cervix clean of vaginal secretion and mucus.
3. Rotate the first sterile swab to cleanse external mucous from the genital area. Then with a second sterile swab obtain exudates from endocervical glands.
4. Place swab in culturette transport tube capped tightly and transport to microbiology laboratory.
5. If no exudates are seen, with a second sterile swab firmly but gently sample the endocervical canal.

Note: For collection and transport of specimens for *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae* detection by PCR, refer to the Molecular Diagnostics section.

Cul-de-sac fluid

1. Submit aspirate or fluid in sterile container suitable to support both aerobic and anaerobic organisms.

Endometrium

1. Collect endometrium specimens by transcervical aspiration through a telescoping catheter. Transfer specimen to sterile container suitable to support both aerobic and anaerobic organisms.

Products of Conception

1. Submit a portion of tissue in a sterile container.

Urethra

1. Collect specimens 1 h or more after patient has urinated.
2. Stimulate discharge by gently massaging the urethra against the pubic symphysis through the vagina.
3. Collect the discharge with a sterile swab.
4. If discharge cannot be obtained, wash external urethra with betadine soap and rinse with water. Insert an urethrogenital swab 2 to 4 cm into the endourethra, gently rotate the swab, and leave it in place for 1 to 2 s. Withdraw the swab, and submit it in the appropriate transport system for culture.

Vagina

1. Collect secretions from the mucosa high in the vaginal canal with sterile pipette or swab.
2. Use a speculum without lubricant
3. Swab specimens for rapid detection of yeast, clue cells, and *Trichomonas vaginalis* should be sent immediately to the microbiology laboratory with less than 1 mL of sterile saline in a tube.

Female or Male**Lesion**

1. Clean the surface of the lesion with 0.85% NaCl. If there is a crust on the lesion, remove it with a sterile scalpel
2. Wipe away fluid and debris with sterile gauze. Try to avoid bleeding.
3. Press the base of lesion until clear fluid is expressed.
4. Firmly rub base with sterile swab to collect fluid.
5. Place in transport tube capped tightly and transport to microbiology laboratory.

Male**Epididymis**

Used primarily to diagnose nonspecific bacterial epididymitis and sexually transmitted epididymitis. Bacterial epididymitis is most commonly due to members of the family *Enterobacteriaceae* or pseudomonads and generally occurs in men over 35 years of age. *M. tuberculosis* infections generally occur after involvement of the prostate or seminal vesicles. Sexually transmitted epididymitis is most commonly due to *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae*. Indicate specific request for organism(s) suspected. Use a needle and syringe to aspirate material from the epididymis.

Prostatic massage

Use primarily to diagnose acute or chronic prostatitis. For both diseases, gram-negative enteric organisms are the most frequently isolated pathogens. *N. gonorrhoeae* is found infrequently but is sometimes implicated in acute prostatitis.

1. Cleanse urethral meatus with soap and water. Massage prostate through the rectum.
2. Collect the specimen in a sterile tube or on a sterile swab.

Urethra

1. Collect specimens at least 2 h after the patient has urinated to detect *N. gonorrhoeae*.
2. Insert a thin urethrogenital swab 2 to 4 cm into the endourethra, gently rotate it, leave it in place for 1 to 2 s, and withdraw it.

Note: For collection and transport of specimens for *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae* detection by PCR, refer to the Molecular Diagnostics section.

Culture of *Mycoplasma hominis* and *Ureaplasma urealyticum*

Specimen Type Varies. Specimen source is required.

Reject Due To

Hemolysis NA

Lipemia NA

Icterus NA

- Wooden shaft
- Cotton swab
- Specimen received in expired transport medium
- Other
 - Tissue specimen in formalin
 - Urine containing any preservatives
 - Specimens received in M4RT transport medium
 - Raw specimens

Specimen Stability Information

Specimen Type	Temperature	Time
Varies	Room Temperature	Unacceptable
	Refrigerated	48 hours
	Frozen -20°C	Unacceptable
	Frozen -70°C	30 days

Culture of *Mycoplasma hominis*

Specimen Type: Swab, fluid or tissue (specimen dependent)

Sources: Cervix, urethra, urogenital, vaginal, pelvic, prostatic secretion, semen, placenta, products of conception, genitourinary

Container/Tube:

Preferred: Dacron or rayon swab with aluminum or plastic shaft (does not need to be in transport media) or 1-2 mL of fluid or 5mm of tissue (specimen dependent)

Acceptable: Swab in transport media: V-C-M medium (green-cap) or universal transport media

Specimen Volume: Entire specimen

Collection Instructions:

Vaginal: Collect specimen by swabbing back and forth over mucosa surface to maximize recovery of cells.

Urethra or Cervical: Collect specimen by inserting swab 1 to 3 cm and rotating 360 degrees.

Culture of *Ureaplasma urealyticum*

Specimen Type: Vaginal

Container/Tube:

Preferred: Dacron or rayon swab with aluminum or plastic shaft (does not need to be in transport media)

Acceptable: Swab in transport media: V-C-M medium (green-cap) or universal transport media

Specimen Volume: 1 swab

Collection Instructions: Collect specimen by swabbing back and forth over mucosa surface to maximize recovery of cells.

Specimen Type: Cervix, urethra, urogenital

Container/Tube:

Preferred: Dacron or rayon swab with aluminum or plastic shaft (does not need to be in transport media)

Acceptable: Swab in transport media: V-C-M medium (green cap) or universal transport media

Specimen Volume: 1 swab

Collection Instructions: Collect specimen by inserting swab 1 to 3 cm and rotating 360 degrees.

Specimen Type: Pelvic, amniotic, prostatic secretion, semen, reproductive drainage/fluid

Container/Tube:

Preferred: Sterile container

Acceptable: Specimen in 3 mL of transport media: V-C-M medium (green-cap) or universal transport media

Specimen Volume: 1-2 mL

Specimen Type: Tissue

Sources: Placenta, products of conception, genitourinary

Container/Tube: Sterile container

Specimen Volume: 5 mm

Collection Instructions: Submit only fresh tissue.

Collection of Specimens and Techniques for Diagnosis of Virus Infections, see Collection Guidelines for Laboratory Diagnosis of Common Viral Infections. Request collection materials from Microbiology Lab.

Reference:

Versalovic, James (Editor in Chief), editors Karen C. Carroll, Guido Funke, James H. Jorgenson, Marie Louise Landry, David W. Warnock, 2011. 10th Edition. Manual of Clinical Microbiology, American Society for Microbiology, Washington, D.C.