 <p>central peninsula hospital 250 Hospital Place Soldotna, AK 99669</p>	POLICY TITLE: Throat Swab Collection	DEPARTMENT: CPGH - Facility Wide CATEGORY: Laboratory Services SECTION: Microbiology
	POLICY NUMBER: CPGH.705.060	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 2023 Original Date of Policy: MC-568 - 9/92
	AUTHORIZED BY: Laboratory Medical Director	Revised: CPGH.705.060 – 8/15, 12/17, 1/19; (MC-568 - 5/95, 6/97, 9/00, 12/09), 7/23, 10/23 Reviewed: 11/97, 1/99, 7/00, 8/01, 5/03, 10/04, 2/06, 11/16, 11/19, 7/20, 7/21, 7/23

APPLIES TO: Throat/pharynx swab collections.

RESPONSIBILITY: Physicians & other Medical Providers, Nursing and Laboratory Staff

DEFINITIONS: None

POLICY: Collect throat/pharynx swabs with sterile swab applicators from the posterior pharynx, tonsillar areas, and any inflamed or exudative areas. Do not obtain specimens if the epiglottis is inflamed, since sampling may trigger life-threatening respiratory obstruction.

PRINCIPLE: Bacteria is ubiquitous in the upper respiratory system therefore, it is important to obtain a high quality specimen to ensure clinically significant results. Swab applicators for bacterial sampling are manufactured using fibers that have not been treated with chemical additives, whitening agents or bleaches as these substances can compromise the viability of microorganisms and performance of the product. Organisms in the sample material are protected from drying by moisture in the swab transport medium. Once a swab sample is collected it should be placed in the tube of media and transported to the laboratory as soon as possible.

MATERIALS: Personal Protective Equipment, as applicable (i.e. gloves, mask, etc.)
Tongue depressor
Specimen labels
Aerobic culture swab collection kit (varies)

SPECIMEN: Specimen: Aerobic culture swab(s) in transport media.

- Refer to assay or culture-specific policies for individual test requirements.

Stability:

- Culture: 24 hours at ambient temperature.
- PCR: Refer to assay-specific policies.
- Rapid Strep: Refer to Rapid Strep policy or package insert.
- Do not freeze.

Unacceptable:

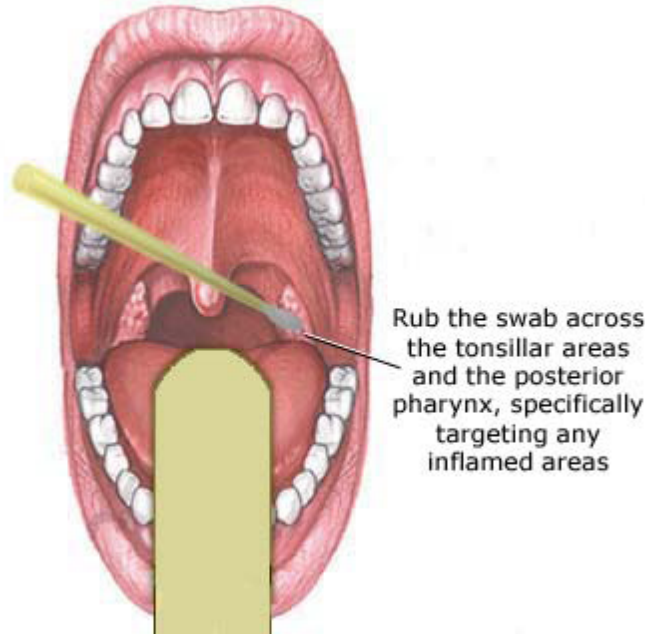
- Expired collection kits.
- Non-sterile collection kits.

PROCEDURE:

1. Peel open the culture swab kit pouch.
2. Remove cap from transport media.
3. Remove applicator swab(s).
4. Place gentle pressure on the tongue with tongue depressor.
5. Extend swab(s) between the tonsillar pillars and behind the uvula, voiding the tongue, buccal mucosa and uvula.

6. Sweep the swab(s) back and forth across the posterior pharynx, tonsillar areas, and any inflamed or exudative areas (See Figure 1).
 - a. Caution: Do not obtain specimens if the epiglottis is inflamed, since sampling may trigger life-threatening respiratory obstruction.
7. Remove the swab without touching the tongue, uvula, or oral mucosa.
8. Place applicator swab(s) in swab transport tube.
9. Label specimen according to CPH policy CPGH.700.080 Laboratory Specimens.
10. Transport specimen to the laboratory within 24 hours at ambient temperature.

Figure 1. The proper technique for obtaining throat specimens



REPORTING RESULTS: N/A

REFERENCE RANGES: N/A

QUALITY CONTROL: N/A

CALIBRATION: N/A

LIMITATIONS: PCR assays or other tests/cultures may require specific swab types. Refer to assay-specific policies for specific test requirements.

REVISION RESPONSIBILITY: Microbiology Supervisor and/or designee

REFERENCES: Diagnostic Microbiology, 13th ed., Bailey & Scott's, Forbes, Mosby, 2014.

Throat Culture Procedure, LTR7116, Blanchard Valley Hospital Services, Findlay OH, www.blanchardvalleyhospital.org

Leber, Amy L., Burnham, Carey-Ann D. et al. Clinical Microbiology Procedures Handbook 5th edition Volume 1. Washington DC. ASM Press, 2023.

