

## VIRAL CULTURE INCLUDING *HERPES SIMPLEX* CULTURE

### I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of viral infections are common among pediatric patients. Depending on the particular infection, diagnosis is best accomplished by one or a variety of techniques including culture, direct antigen testing by FA or EIA, serology and PCR. **If one is not familiar with the best method or methods to use, it is always best to call Laboratory Services at (800) 934-6575 before tests are ordered and specimens collected.**

### II. SPECIMEN COLLECTION

- (1) A viral collection kit with swabs and M4 transport medium is available by contacting Laboratory Services. The kit contains brief instructions (see below) for proper collection of specimens from various body sites.
- (2) Specimens for viral culture which are commonly collected on outpatients include skin lesions for *Herpes simplex* virus (HSV) or *Varicella zoster* virus (VZV), cervical or vaginal cultures for HSV, conjunctival cultures for HSV or *Adenovirus*, and respiratory tract cultures (throat, NP, nasal wash) for HSV, *Adenovirus*, *Human metapneumovirus* and the respiratory viruses (*RSV*, *Influenza A/B*, and *Parainfluenzas 1, 2, 3*). It is important to remember that because viruses are intracellular pathogens, vigorous swab collections should be obtained to include cellular material.
- (3) Transport to laboratory as quickly as possible, refrigerated.

Detection of Rotavirus or Enteric Adenovirus 40/41 requires a passed stool specimen. One gram or one mL of stool should be submitted. Anal swabs are not acceptable.

Note: Consult Laboratory Services at (800) 934-6575 for information on the diagnosis of other viral infections.





## **GENERAL COLLECTION INFORMATION**

### **1. LABEL AND TRANSPORT INSTRUCTIONS**

- **Assure proper labeling of specimen. Standard labeling requirements include:**
  1. **Patient's full legal name – complete first and last names correctly spelled**
  2. **Test Requisition Barcode, Medical Record Number or Date of Birth**
  3. **Date & time of collections (documented on sample or requisition)**
  4. **Name of collector (documented on sample or requisition)**
  5. **Source of specimen**
- **These collection guidelines serve only as general instructions. Only trained personnel should perform these procedures.**
- M4 collection transport medium is used to transport all types of swab specimens for viral, Chlamydial and Mycoplasma cultures, PCR testing, and Respiratory Infection Array (FARVPP).
- Prior to sample collection, check the collection kit to ensure that the transport medium has not passed the expiration date. Also, check the color of the media to make sure it is pink. If it is yellow or purple, do not use.
- M4 collection transport medium is preferred to be stored refrigerated, but is acceptable at room temperature.
- Once the sample has been collected in the media, the sample **MUST** be refrigerated and transported on ice or cold-pack.

### **2. COLLECTION KIT CONTENTS**

- Sterile polyester- tipped swabs (enclosed in paper envelope) and sterile flocked swabs (enclosed in paper envelope)
- M4 transport media (pink vial)
- Specimen labels

### **3. GENERAL SWAB COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS**

- Apply appropriate but significant pressure to the body site to be cultured while rotating the swab.
- This ensures that adequate cells (viruses and chlamydial species are intracellular) are obtained.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.

## **RESPIRATORY SITE COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS**

### **1. THROAT SWAB COLLECTION FOR RESPIRATORY VIRAL CULTURE OR MYCOPLASMA PNEUMONIAE DETECTION BY PCR**

- Use sterile **polyester-tipped swab** provided in M4 Collection Kit.
- Swab posterior oropharynx and tonsillar tissues firmly in a manner similar as for streptococcal throat culture.
- If specific lesions are seen (suggesting HSV, enterovirus, etc), use a second swab to samples the lesions.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.
- Note: Viral throat culture is also good specimen type for recovery of adenovirus but not RSV or influenza.

### **2. POSTERIOR NASOPHARYNX SWAB COLLECTION FOR MYCOPLASMA PNEUMONIAE AND BORDETELLA PERTUSSIS/ BORDETELLA PARAPERTUSSIS BY PCR, CHLAMYDIA TRACHOMATIS CULTURE, RESPIRATORY VIRAL CULTURE, RESPIRATORY INFECTION ARRAY (FARVPP) FOR INFLUENZA A & B VIRUSES, RSV, HUMAN METAPNEUMOVIRUS, RHINOVIRUS/ENTEROVIRUS, CORONAVIRUS, PARAINFLUENZAVIRUS 1-4, ADENOVIRUS, CHLAMYDIOPHILA PNEUMONIAE, BORDETELLA PERTUSSIS AND MYCOPLASMA PNEUMONIA.**

- Use sterile **flocked swab** provided in M4 Collection Kit.
- Have patient lie down on his/ her back or sit in a chair.
- Immobilize patient's head and gently insert sterile **flocked swab** into one naris while lifting the nostrils.
- Continue inserting the swab with a rotating back and forth motion until it reaches the posterior nasopharynx where resistance is met. This will require the swab to bend along the curvature of the nasopharyngeal space. The distance inserted to reach the posterior nasopharynx should be at least a few inches, depending on the age of the patient.
- Leave the swab in place for 5-10 seconds. This will likely induce tearing and coughing.
- Withdraw the swab with a rotating motion to loosen and collect cellular material while in contact with the mucosal surfaces of the mid-inferior portion of the inferior turbinate.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.



**Note: If ordering multiple respiratory tests, one NP sample for Respiratory Infection Array (FARVPP) should be submitted as a separate sterile flocked swab in M4 media. Additional molecular respiratory testing (PCR) can be combined into a second NP sample and submitted as a sterile flocked swab in M4 media.**

## **NON-RESPIRATORY BODY SITE COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS**

### **1. ANAL SWAB COLLECTION FOR VIRAL CULTURE**

- Wet sterile **polyester-tipped swab** with sterile saline.
- Firmly swab rectal mucosa while rotating swab.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.

### **2. CERVICAL, VAGINAL, OR URETHRAL SWAB COLLECTION FOR VIRAL OR *C. TRACHOMATIS* CULTURE**

- Firmly swab desired area with sterile **polyester-tipped swab**.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.

### **3. CONJUNCTIVAL SWAB COLLECTION FOR VIRAL OR *C. TRACHOMATIS* CULTURE OR HSV/VZV BY PCR**

- Firmly swab conjunctiva with sterile **polyester-tipped swab**.
- Left and right eye may be collected with **separate swabs** and pooled into one M4 vial.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.

### **4. LESION/ VESICLE SWAB COLLECTION FOR VIRAL CULTURE OR HSV/VZV BY PCR**

- Newly developed, unbroken vesicles provide best yield.
- Break vesicle and firmly swab fluid and vesicle base (to obtain cells) with sterile **polyester-tipped swab**.
- If vesicle is already broken, select vesicle with moist base, scrape outer layer and firmly swab base.
- More than one vesicle/lesion may be sampled and the specimens pooled in one vial.
- Agitate swab briskly in vial containing M4 transport media.
- Cut the swab shaft leaving tip in vial and secure the lid tightly.

### **5. TISSUE FOR VIRAL CULTURE**

- Autopsy or biopsy tissue obtained for viral culture should be placed into M4 vials.

## **LABEL AND TRANSPORT INSTRUCTIONS**

- **Assure proper labeling of specimen. Standard labeling requirements include::**
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  3. **Date & time of collections (documented on sample or requisition)**
  4. **Name of collector (documented on sample or requisition)**
  5. **Source of specimen**
- Transport the vial with swab in a biohazard zip-lock transport bag to the laboratory as soon as possible.
- After sample collection, specimens **MUST** be refrigerated and transported on ice or cold-pack.

### **Contacting Laboratory Services**

**Client Services..... (614)722-5477 or (800) 934-6575**

Virology Laboratory personnel can be consulted for technical and collection procedure information by calling the phone number above.