



Swab guide

February 2020

General instructions

- Check expiry date of swab prior to use
- Essential labelling information:
 - Full name, date of birth, gender
 - Collector initials
 - Site, date and time of collection
- Apply barcode (Collection Centre only)
- Ensure cap is replaced firmly
- Swabs should not be refrigerated
- PCR requests – one swab per pathogen
- Chlamydia PCR and/or gonorrhoea PCR:
 - When urethral swab requested, collect first-void urine ONLY
- Gonorrhoea culture (M/C/S):
 - Collect penile swab or cervical swab

Microbiology swabs (bacterial culture, bacterial/viral PCR)

Insert swab shaft into tube, snap shaft at marked line and recap tube

Sigma Transwab® (standard shaft, orange top)

Sampling any site, including genital

- Bacterial culture (aerobic and anaerobic)
- All PCR (bacterial and viral)
- Multi-resistant organism (e.g. MRSA)
- NOT for cervical screening for HPV
- Chlamydia/Gonorrhoea PCR



Sigma Transwab® (thin shaft, blue top)

Nasopharyngeal collections only

- Pertussis and/or respiratory virus PCR



Special collections

Flocked swab (red top)

- Patient self-collect for HPV PCR (must be supervised by clinician)
- Buccal swab for genetic tests





Swab selection: A simplified approach

- Swabs are the second most frequently processed specimen type in microbiology and molecular pathology.
- The large variety of different swabs has been a longstanding cause of confusion and avoidable specimen re-collections.
- The Sigma Transwab® is now available and allows the use of a **single type of swab for nearly all microbiological and molecular tests.**

Advantages of the Sigma Transwab®

- Suitable for Gram stain and bacterial culture from any site and for the same range of bacterial pathogens as previous swab types.
- Suitable for diagnosis of viral infections (by PCR) and some fungal infections (e.g. Candida).
- Suitable for all molecular assays (one swab per requested pathogen is preferred).
- Suitable for screening for multi-resistant organisms (e.g. MRSA).

Stock replacement

- The process of stock replacement commenced in April.
- During the transition from the current swabs to Sigma Transwab®, either type can be used for specimen collection.
- If you require stock, please fax the Stores Order Form to (02) 4224 7457.

Swab guide

- Overleaf you will find a guide to the new range of swabs and the indications for using each one.

For further information regarding the new swabs, please contact (02) 4224 7474