




# SWAB GUIDE

**Label all specimens with TWO points of identification (eg full name, date of birth, NHI)  
Include relevant clinical details with ALL requests**





## Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATs) for Sexually Transmitted Infections

Which swab/specimen	Notes
<b>NAAT testing for <i>Chlamydia</i> and <i>N. gonorrhoeae</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>GEN-PROBE APTIMA Vaginal Swab Specimen Collection Kit</b> (pink swab and orange label tube) Use for all sites eg vulvovaginal, eye, anal, throat</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>GEN-PROBE APTIMA Urine Specimen Collection Kit</b> (yellow label tube)</li> </ul>  <p><b>*****Please note: other specimen types (eg BD Viper collection kits, Surepath specimens, urine not in the Aptima collection kit, orange floq swabs) cannot be tested and will be rejected.*****</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female: a vulvovaginal swab (self- or clinician-collected) is the preferred specimen                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Break the swab at the score mark into the collection tube</li> <li>○ Urine specimens on women have reduced sensitivity and should not routinely be submitted</li> </ul> </li> <li>Male: a first void urine (first 20mL of stream, preferably at least 1 hour after last voiding urine) is the preferred specimen                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Urine must be sent to the laboratory in the urine collection tube (yellow label)</li> <li>○ Urine must be transferred to the collection tube within 24 hours of collection</li> <li>○ NAAT testing of urethral swabs is not routinely recommended.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Anorectal and pharyngeal swabs should be collected for NAAT testing in all men who have sex with men or in others based on sexual history – orange label tube kit</li> <li>Do not pierce the foil cap, cut swabs, or place more than one swab in the collection tube</li> <li>All collection kits contain liquid transport medium. DO NOT apply this liquid (in the tube) to skin or mucous membranes or take internally</li> <li>If the liquid is spilled or tipped out, use a fresh collection kit</li> <li>Store at 2-30°C prior to transport to the laboratory</li> </ul>






## NAAT testing for *Trichomonas vaginalis*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>GEN-PROBE APTIMA Vaginal Swab Specimen Collection Kit</b> (pink swab and orange label tube)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both vulvovaginal (self- or physician-collected) and high vaginal swabs can be tested</li> <li>It can be performed on samples submitted for <i>Chlamydia</i> and <i>N. gonorrhoeae</i> testing</li> <li>Must be specifically requested with clinical details</li> <li>Store at 2-30°C prior to transport to the laboratory</li> </ul>
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## Testing for Bacterial Infections

Which swab/specimen	Notes
<b>Culture for <i>N. gonorrhoeae</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urethral: <b>Bacterial charcoal swab</b> (blue top)</li> </ul>   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other sites (endocervical, eye, throat, rectal): <b>Bacterial swab</b> (purple top)</li> </ul>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symptomatic females: endocervical swab</li> <li>Symptomatic males: urethral swab</li> <li>Testing in asymptomatic patients or at extragenital sites: nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT)</li> <li>Indicate on the request form if symptomatic or if NAAT positive</li> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> </ul>

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Testing for Bacterial Infections (contd)	
Which swab/specimen	Notes
<b>Routine bacterial culture</b> (eg throat swabs, wounds, eyes, vaginal swab for BV or candidiasis)	
<b>Bacterial swab</b> (purple top) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> <li>Where available, tissue samples or aspirated pus are preferred to a swab</li> </ul>
<b>Culture for <i>B. pertussis</i></b>	
<b>Bacterial charcoal swab</b> (blue top) of nasopharynx 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturing for <i>B. pertussis</i> is only useful in the first 2 weeks of symptoms</li> <li>A <u>nasopharyngeal</u> swab is collected by inserting the swab through the nose, horizontal with the hard palate, to the back of the nasopharynx</li> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> </ul>
<b>PCR for <i>B. pertussis</i></b>	
<b>Orange top floq swab</b> (dry) of nasopharynx 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Requires prior approval from a Clinical Microbiologist or the Medical Officer of Health</b></li> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> </ul>
Testing for Viral Infections	
Which swab/specimen	Notes
<b>PCR for herpes simplex viruses 1 and 2, varicella zoster virus, and adenovirus</b>	
<b>Orange top floq swab</b> (dry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please specify sites and include clinical details.</li> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> </ul>
<b>PCR for measles, mumps, or respiratory viruses (eg influenza, RSV)</b>	
<b>Measles or respiratory virus PCR:</b> nasopharyngeal swab collected using the <b>Measles PCR collection kit</b> or submit nasopharyngeal aspirate <b>Mumps virus PCR:</b> Oral swab, collected using the <b>Measles PCR collection kit</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Requires prior approval from a Clinical Microbiologist or the Medical Officer of Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For measles and mumps PCR, prior <b>discussion with the Medical Officer of Health is mandatory</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>For measles PCR, the request should also be accompanied by a measles reporting form, available from <a href="http://www.measles.co.nz/specimen-guidelines">http://www.measles.co.nz/specimen-guidelines</a></li> <li>For mumps PCR, collect the oral swab from around Stenson's duct, where the parotid gland drains into the mouth                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For optimal sensitivity, this should be collected as early as possible in the illness</li> </ul> </li> <li>Break orange top floq swab into universal transport media (red top tube)</li> <li>If &gt;2 hours before the specimen will reach the laboratory, <b>refrigerate at 4°C</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>GEN-PROBE APTIMA specimens can be stored at 2-30°C.</b>  <b>All other specimens should be refrigerated at 4°C if there will be a delay of &gt;2 hours before the specimen reaches the laboratory</b></p>	