

Upper Respiratory Culture Information Sheet

Overview

MDL Test Name

Upper Respiratory Culture

MDL Test Code

UR_CULT

Ask at Order Questions

N/A

Specimen Source

- Throat swab
- Oropharyngeal swab
- Nasal swab
- Nasopharynx swab

Specimen Requirements

Container/Tube

ESwab

Specimen Volume (minimum)

- N/A (swab specimen)
- must have swab present in container

Sample Stability Time

48 hours

Transport/Storage Conditions

- Refrigerated (2 – 8°C)
- Ambient (20 – 25°C)

- Group F Streptococcus
- Anaerobes
- Haemophilus species (not influenzae)
- Eikenella
- Actinobacillus
- Capnocytophaga
- Moraxella
- Enterococci
- Yeasts (not Cryptococcus)
- Insignificant numbers of *S. aureus*, gram-negative rods, and *N. meningitidis*

Cautions

- x Specimens from the upper respiratory tract can be easily obtained but are always contaminated with resident microbiota. Many microorganisms present in the nares and throat are found in both the disease and the carrier states.
- x Culture of nasopharyngeal specimens to detect carriage of potential pathogens such as *Neisseria meningitidis*, *S. pneumoniae*, and *H. influenzae* should be discouraged. Since these pathogens are all part of the normal oropharyngeal flora, the clinical relevance of culturing them from this site cannot be determined.
- x Upper respiratory cultures should be done when detection of a specific pathogen is sought and not be performed routinely to detect any organism that is present.