

Specimen Sites/Types:

- › Abscess and cellulitis specimens
- › Superficial wounds – lesions, ulcers, rash, etc. – which would not be appropriate for anaerobic culture.

**Note:** Anaerobic cultures are recommended for Deep wounds (surgical incisions, punctures, bites, etc.) See Anaerobic culture testing.

Unacceptable Specimens:

- › Superficial wounds sent for anaerobic cultures.
- › Dry swabs (swabs not in transport medium or culturette ampule not broken).

Materials Needed:

- › CultureSwab (red cap), if an anaerobic culture is to be ordered see Anaerobic cultures
- › If both a culture and a Gram stain are requested on swab specimens, two swabs are preferred.
- › 70% alcohol
- › Iodine tincture applicators

Specimen Collection:

1. Cleanse the site.
  - a. Use a 70% isopropyl alcohol swab rub in a circular motion starting at the sample collection site and extending out to cover a 3-inch circle followed by a Sepps 2% iodine disposable swab to cleanse the skin, being careful not to rupture lesions.
  - b. With a Sepps swab, vigorously rub in a circular motion starting at the sample collection site and extending out to cover a 30inch circle for about 20-30 seconds duration. Allow iodine prep to dry for about one minute.
    - a. **Do Not Touch Area After Cleaning.** Gloves must be worn while collecting specimen.
    - b. This site preparation procedure may need to be modified for open wounds and ulcers. If you are unable to decontaminate the surrounding skin, then do your best to avoid contact with it while collecting the sample.
2. Swab or aspirate deep or active area – not lesion surfaces. Collect two swabs if Gram stain is requested.
3. For deep wounds, place swab or pus in anaerobic transport system (see Anaerobic Cultures). For Superficial wounds, from which recovery of anaerobes would be unlikely, use the red cap CultureSwab.
4. Label specimen and prepare requisition.
  - a. Give the complete source, not just wound. e.g. Left leg wound or dog bite on right leg
  - b. Indicate if it is a surgical incision or a bite of some kind.
5. Transport specimen to the Laboratory as soon as possible.