

**Test: Pertussis culture**

**Specimen receiving:** Specimens for pertussis culture will be accepted from Monday thru Friday by 3:30 p.m. , except on holidays.

**Turn around Time:** 7 days

**Specimen requirements:** Nasopahyngal swabs

**Specimen collection:**

- Specimen collection must be done prior to antibiotic treatment. Collect specimens up to 4 weeks after onset, provided that therapy has not been started.
- Collect samples from the nasopharyngeal site and not the throat.
- Use a calcium alginate swab or Dacron fiber tip swab on a fine flexible wire.
- Bend the wire so that it mimics the curve of the nasal airway and gently pass the swab through the nostril to the posterior nasopharynx.
- Do not force the swab; resistance will be felt when the posterior nasopharynx is reached.
- Rotate the swab and leave it in place for up to 30 seconds or until the patient coughs.
- Withdraw as quickly as possible.
- Repeat procedure through the second nostril.
- Insert swabs into Regan-Lowe transport media. Snip off the excess wire from the wire shaft.
- Submit transport media for culture

**Specimen transport:**

- If delay is brief (<2 hours), use 0.5 to 1% casein hydrolysate (casamino acid) solution as a transport medium
- If specimen will be plated within 24 hours of collection, use Amies with charcoal.
- If delay is prolonged (>24 hours but <3 days), use Regan-Lowe transport (RLT). Incubate the RLT at 35°C for two days. Then hold at room temperature during transport. Transit time should not exceed 3 days.
- If transit time will exceed 3 days, use Regan-Lowe transport. Incubate at 35°C for 2 days, then refrigerate at 2-8°C. Submit within 8 days.

**Requisition form:**

- All specimens must be submitted with the appropriate 81.3 test requisition form.
- Tests will be performed with only the written or faxed request of an authorized person or entity.
- The requisition form must legible and include: patient name (or other unique identifier).
- The test to be performed must be listed
- The specimen site must be listed.
- The date of specimen collection is required.
- Any additional information relevant and necessary to assure accurate and timely testing and reporting of results is helpful.

**Normal value:**                      None found

**Result notification:**                      A positive culture finding will be called in to the submitting laboratory. DIB will also be notified. Final laboratory reports will be forwarded to both the submitter and to the Disease Investigation Branch.

**Comments:**

- DFA is no longer performed at the State Laboratories Division
- Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) is available for outbreak investigations conducted by the Disease Investigation Branch

**Unacceptable conditions:**

- Improperly collected specimens
- Contaminated or overgrown specimens
- Illegible or incomplete requisition forms
- Requisition and specimen identifiers do not match
- Specimen not labeled properly
- Submitter or return address not on form
- Throat swabs, nares swabs and sputum are unacceptable
- Cultures collected on rayon or cotton swabs may contain inhibitory fatty acids, which may inhibit growth.

Specimen Submission Requirements, Bacteriology-Parasitology Section, Med Micro Br.

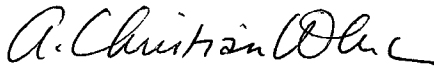
**Test location:**

**State of Hawaii Dept. of Health Laboratories  
Medical Microbiology Branch  
Bacteriology-Parasitology Section  
2725 Waimano Home Road, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Floor  
Pearl City, HI 96782**

**Contact information:**

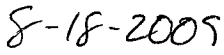
**Phone: (808) 453-6706  
Fax: (808) 453-6716**

**Approved:**

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A. Christian Whelen, Ph.D.

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Date

Date: August 13, 2009