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

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.

Date: August 13, 2009
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, 2nd Floor
Pearl City, HI 96782

Contact information: Phone: (808) 453-6706
Fax: (808) 453-6716

Approved:

A. Christian Whelen, Ph.D. 8-18-2005

Date: August 13, 2009