



Intravenous Catheter Tips

Collection Procedure

Any segment of a catheter is acceptable. Ideally, the intracutaneous segment and distal tip of long catheters should be submitted. The catheter must be in a sterile container and must **not** remain at room temperature for more than 4 hours.

1. Thoroughly cleanse skin around the insertion site with 70% alcohol (alcohol swab and allow to dry).
2. Using sterile forceps, carefully withdraw the catheter, keeping the externalized portion directed upward and away from the skin surface.
3. Procedure for obtaining tip varies with the length of the catheter.
 - **Shorter catheters (5.7 cm):** Using sterile scissors, cut the catheter beginning a few millimeters inside the former skin-surface-catheter-interface.
 - **Longer catheters (≥ 16 cm):** Two 5 cm to 7 cm segments are obtained.
4. Using sterile scissors, a proximal segment is cut beginning a few millimeters inside the former skin-surface-catheter-interface; the distal tip segment is also obtained.
5. Place each catheter segment in a sterile transport container, avoiding contact with the outside of container.
6. Inspect the catheter exit site and note if any purulence can be expelled.
7. If pus can be expelled from the catheter exit site, swab the drainage with a culturette swab and send to the laboratory requesting a routine wound culture. Label the source as: drainage from (location of) IV exit site, (e.g., drainage from Rt. IJ exit site). Send the catheter segment(s) to the laboratory requesting a routine culture. Label the source as: location/type of IV catheter, (e.g., Rt. IJ Swan).