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Throat Culture Collection Instructions

Throat cultures are obtained for diagnosis of streptococcal pharyngitis (Group A Streptococcus) and, as indicated, for other diagnosis such as gonococcal pharyngitis (*Neisseria gonorrhoeae*).

** Rapid Group A Strep includes a rapid screening test for Group A streptococcus, and if the rapid test yields a negative result, a routine culture for beta-hemolytic streptococcus will be performed.

** Throat Culture includes a culture for beta-hemolytic streptococcus.

SUPPLIES:

1. Culturette, (red) dual swab with liquid Stuart's medium
2. Tongue depressor

PROCEDURE:

1. Carefully observe and inspect throat lesions, ulcers, swelling, purulent exudate, etc
2. Remove sterile swabs removed from the culturette package. Sweep the swabs back and forth across the posterior pharynx, tonsillar areas, and any inflamed or exudative areas. A tongue depressor may be used to keep the tongue down and from touching the swab.

NOTE: Extreme caution must be used to avoid touching the mouth or tongue, since their normal flora is frequently quite different from that of the infected throat.

3. Replace swabs in the culturette container without contaminating them further.
4. Label the culturette (not the packaging) with the patient's name, date and time of collection, and your initials. A label may be used for this purpose.

TRANSPORT:

Transport promptly to the laboratory. If swab cannot be transported within 2 hours, keep at room temperature until transport.