

Wound Culture Collections

1. With sterile forceps, remove the dressing to expose the wound. Dispose of the soiled dressings properly.
2. Cleanse the area around the wound with an alcohol or iodine pad to reduce the risk of contaminating the specimen with skin bacteria.
3. Visually examine the wound for exudate pus or fluid. If fluid is present, proceed with collection. If wound is dry, without evidence of fluid or pus, press the wound gently with sterile gauze. Fluid may be expressed to the surface.
4. For an aerobic culture, use eSwab sterile swab to collect as much exudate as possible or insert the swab deeply into the wound. Gently rotate it. Remove the swab from the wound and immediately place in eSwab culture tube. Label and send to Laboratory immediately. Never collect exudate from the skin and then insert the same swab into the wound. This could contaminate the wound with skin bacteria.
5. Multiple sites of the wound may be sampled with the same swab or the physician may direct that multiple swabs be used depending on the appearance of the wound.

6. For an anaerobic culture – three options for collection

- **Deep wounds:** insert the eSwab sterile swab deeply into the wound, rotate it gently and remove it. Immediately place it in the eSwab culture tube.
- **Fluid/exudate:** insert a sterile 10-ml syringe without a needle into the wound. Aspirate 1-5 mls of exudate into the syringe. Inject material into a vacutainer with **no additive** (clear red-top tube, see photo) or a sterile conical or sterile cup. A specimen received in a syringe with a needle attached will not be accepted. A capped syringe with no attached needle will be accepted.
- **Tissue:** Send a pea sized (or more, if anaerobic, fungal, and acid-fast cultures are all wanted) amount of tissue in a sterile container.

Note: Aerobic cultures are most appropriate for sites such as eyes, ears, nares, throat, and boils. Anaerobic cultures are used to collect specimens from deep wound/sterile sites.

For wound fluid/exudate:



**For aerobic AND anaerobic wound collections,
collect ONE eSwab.**

