

# Overview

- Throat collection
- Specimen storage, handling, shipping

# Specimen Collection Kit

- Viral transport medium (VTM)
- Preparing the specimen collection kit
- Managing the specimen collection kit

# What is Viral Transport Medium?

- Used in the collection of samples for viral isolation and testing
- Prevents specimen from drying out
- Prevents bacteria and fungi growth

# How to choose VTM

- Can be made in a lab or purchased
- Different types of VTM:
  - For collection of animal specimens
  - For viral isolation
  - For molecular testing
    - (Do not use phosphate-based media)
- If VTM is not available, 100% ethanol can be used for molecular testing

# Storing VTM

- Sterile collection vials containing 1.5-2 ml of VTM
- Vials can be stored in a freezer at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  until use
- Vials can be stored for short periods of time at  $4 - 6^{\circ}\text{C}$



# Managing Media Stock

- Keep records of when the VTM was made
- Do not use vials if the liquid becomes cloudy

# Specimen Collection Kit (for Throat Swab)

- Collection vials with VTM
- Polyester fiber-tipped applicators
- Tongue depressors
- Secondary container
- Tertiary container
- Ice packs
- Personal protective equipment
- Field collection forms
- pen or marker for labeling samples
- Ice Box for keeping VTM
- Autoclaves Bags

# Polyester Fiber-Tipped Applicator



- Should be drayon, rayon, or polyester-fiber swabs
- Do *not* use calcium alginate or cotton swabs nor ones with wooden sticks; they inhibit PCR

# Personal Protective Equipment

- Gloves
- Mask (N-95 or N/P/R-100)
- Gown
- Eye protection
- Hair covers
- Boot or shoe covers

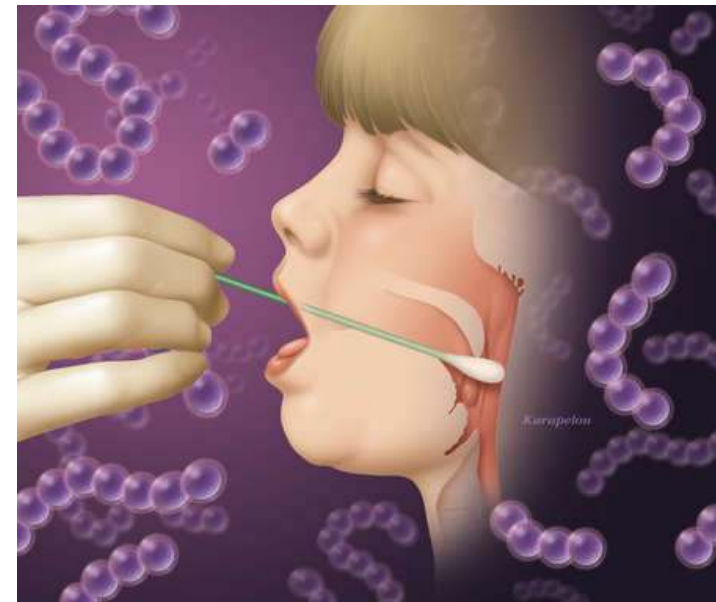


# How to Manage Kits

- Store specimen collection kits in a dry, cool place
- Store specimen collection kit where it will be accessible after hours and on weekends

# Throat Swab

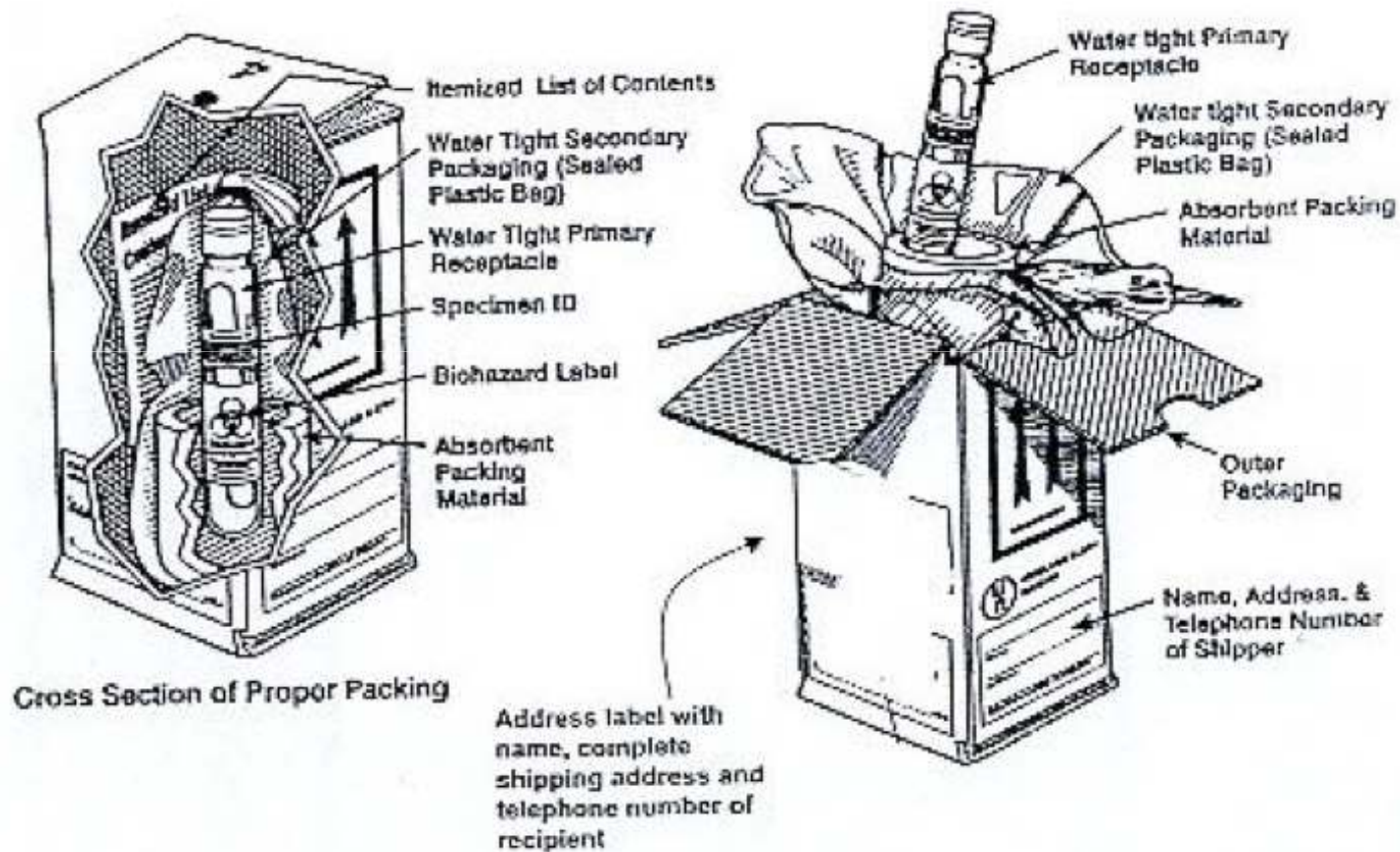
- Ask the subject to open his or her mouth
- Depress the tongue
- Swab the posterior pharynx and both tonsils vigorously
- Put tip swab into vial containing VTM, breaking applicator's stick



# Packing Specimens for Transportation

- Use three packaging layers
- First layer should be water tight
- Use absorbent material in all layers
- No more than 500 mL should be in the specimen container

# Transporting Specimens from Field to Lab



The labeling for contents should include the words:  
**“UN 3373 Diagnostic Specimens”**

# Packing Specimens for Transportation

- Keep specimens at 4 °C
  - Fill a cooler with ice packs or coolant packs
- Include an itemized list of specimens with identification numbers and request forms

# Appropriate Disinfectants

- 70% ethanol
- 5% lysol
- 10% bleach