

J-170 Nose and Throat Specimen Collection

Purpose

Detect pathogenic microorganisms in the nose and throat and to determine the degree of infection.

Applies To

Registered Nurses

Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses

Other (*Identify*): _____

Equipment/Supplies

- Sterile culture tubes with two swabs (flexible wire swab with cotton tip may be used for nose cultures).
- Tongue blades (throat collection).
- Nasal speculum (nose collection).
- Facial tissues.
- One pair of disposable gloves.
- Penlight.
- Emeses basin or clean container.

Procedure

1. Wash hands. Refer to Hand Washing procedure.
2. Explain the procedure to the client.
3. Don clean gloves.
4. If possible, position the client in sitting position.
5. Loosen top of tube to prepare for use.
6. Throat Culture Collection:
 - a. Have the client tilt his/her head backwards. Position client with a pillow between shoulders.
 - b. Ask the client to say "Ah."
 - c. Depress anterior 1/3 of tongue blade if unable to visualize pharynx. Note areas of inflammation on pharynx or tonsils.
 - d. Insert swab into the client's mouth without touching lips, teeth, tongue, or cheeks. Swab tonsil areas that are most inflamed or purulent.
 - e. Withdraw swab carefully without touching oral structures and immediately place swab in culture tube. Crush ampule at bottom of tube and push tip of swab into the liquid medium.

- f. Secure top of tube.
7. Nose Culture Collection:
 - a. Have the client blow nose. Check for patency of nostrils with penlight. Have the client alternately occlude each nostril and exhale.
 - b. Position the client with head tilted back. Position bed bound client with a pillow between shoulders.
 - c. Gently insert nasal speculum in one nostril.
 - d. Carefully pass swab through the speculum until it reaches the inflamed portion of the nostril. Rotate swab quickly.
 - e. Remove swab without touching sides of speculum and immediately place swab in culture tube. Crush ampule at bottom of tube and push tip of swab into the liquid medium.
 - f. Gently remove speculum and place in basin. Offer client facial tissues.
8. Remove gloves and discard waste as outlined in the Agency Waste Disposal Policy.
9. Wash hands. Refer to Hand Washing procedure.
10. Place labeled specimen in biohazard bag and attach requisition. Deliver specimen to laboratory or place in refrigerator.

Documentation Guidelines

Document in clinical record:

1. Specimen collection type, time, and date.
2. Appearance of nasal and oral mucosal structures.
3. The client’s tolerance of the procedure.

Related Procedures

None

Policy History

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