

Manual: Lab Reference	Procedure Version # LA 13041.2
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Std.	

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING SPECIMENS FOR PERTUSSIS

Specimen: nasopharyngeal swabs

Collect the specimen under the following conditions for optimal laboratory results:

- Collect as early in the course of the illness as possible.
- Collect prior to the use of any chemotherapeutic agents.

### Materials

Culture – 1 calcium alginate wire shaft swab

1 tube Regan-Lowe Transport Medium

Store refrigerated prior to use. Allow to reach room temperature prior to inoculation.

PCR – 1 plastic capped tube

1 polyester (Dacron) wire shaft swab

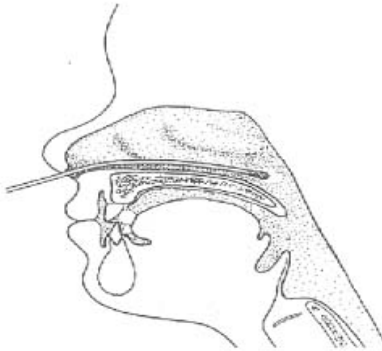
Can be stored refrigerated or at room temperature prior to use.

### Procedure:

1. Allow the media to warm to room temperature for at least 15 minutes before collecting your specimen.
2. Label the Regan-Lowe Transport (Black Media) Tube and clear plastic tube with the patient's name, date of birth, and date of collection. The clear Plastic tube can be sent alone if Regan-Lowe media is expired.
3. For collection of specimen for culture:

With the patient's neck in an extended position, gently insert a **sterile calcium alginate swab** into the right nostril. Pass the swab along the floor of the nose until it contacts the posterior nasopharyngeal wall and gently rotate for 5 seconds to absorb secretions. Remove the swab and place it in the Regan-Lowe tube immersing the swab tip completely in the medium. Cap the tube.

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4. For collection of specimen for PCR:

Repeat step 3 using a **polyester swab** in the Left nostril. Remove the swab and place it into the plastic tube. Cap the tube.

5. To expedite diagnosis, transport to the laboratory promptly. The sample must reach the Public Health Laboratory within 3 days of collection for effective *B. pertussis* detection.

6. If the specimen must be held prior to shipment,

- a. Refrigerate PCR tube with swab until shipment.
- b. If transport will be within 24 hours of collection, store Regan-Lowe at room temperature (20 – 25° C) until shipment.
- c. NLH Lab: If transport will be within 48 – 72 hours of collection, incubate Regan-Lowe only, at 34 – 37° C until shipment.

Reference: Public Health Laboratories, Division of Public Health Services, Concord, NH, Instruction Sheet 07/2011