



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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TO: Submitters of STI/HIV Specimens to the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory

FROM: Laura Naught, PhD, NRCC(TC)
Laboratory Director
Missouri State Public Health Laboratory

DATE: July 9, 2021

RE: STI/HIV testing

The Missouri State Public Health Laboratory (MSPHL) would like to make you aware of recent improvements to the STI/HIV laboratory services we provide. We believe these improvements will automate processes, improve quality and provide more rapid access to the results we produce.

On July 1, 2021, the MSPHL updated the confirmatory syphilis testing to an automated system. The Syphilis TP test will replace the TP-PA test and will be designated as such on the result report. The Syphilis TP test is a chemiluminescent microparticle immunoassay and is conducted on an existing Abbott Architect instrument (This is the same instrument currently used for our HIV screening.). The traditional syphilis algorithm will still be utilized with an RPR being performed initially. If the RPR is reactive or latent syphilis is suspected, the new Syphilis TP test will be performed and results will be either Reactive or Non-reactive. It is still important that you fill the provided 6 mL red top vacutainer tube to ensure all the testing can be performed.

The MSPHL is also in the process of changing how ct/gc rectal and pharyngeal samples are currently collected. The FDA has recently approved the orange multitest swab collection device to collect rectal and pharyngeal samples. Previously, the MSPHL had performed an off-label validation to use the unisex collection device (blue swab with the white device) for submission of these samples. Now that the FDA has approved the device for extragenital samples, the MSPHL will be utilizing this device. This is the same device that is currently being used for vaginal collections. Proper collection for pharyngeal and rectal sites are included in the attached document.

Finally, the MSPHL is excited to announce that STI/HIV testing was integrated into a different MSPHL laboratory information management system (LIMS) on July 1, 2021. The new system will provide several enhancements including a web portal for providers to access results in real time. A new test request form is necessary for use with the system and is located at: <https://health.mo.gov/lab/specimentestforms.php#testrequestforms>. It is still necessary to print, complete and submit the test request form with each sample. Please recycle any old forms that you may have remaining. If you would like information about how to access the web portal for your results, please contact the MSPHL Informatics Unit at 573-522-9560 or email MSPHLInformatics@health.mo.gov.

We hope that these enhancements provide beneficial tools for your operation and that the MSPHL can continue to provide quality laboratory services for your facility. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please feel free to contact the Immunology Unit directly at 573-751-1465 or email: Nicole Ayres, Immunology Senior Laboratory Scientist, at Nicole.Ayres@health.mo.gov or Dana Strobe, Immunology Unit Manager, at Dana.Strobe@health.mo.gov.

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Rectal Swab Specimens Collection and Handling

Note: For patient-collected rectal swab specimen collection, ensure that patients read the Patient Collection Instructions before providing them with a collection kit.

Instructions for rectal swab specimen collection:

1. Partially peel open the swab package. Remove the swab. Do not touch the soft tip or lay the swab down. If the soft tip is touched, the swab is laid down, or the swab is dropped, use a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.
2. Hold the swab, placing your thumb and forefinger in the middle of the swab shaft covering the score line. Do not hold the swab shaft below the score line.
3. Carefully insert the swab into the rectum about 1-2 inches (3-5 cm) past the anal margin and **gently rotate the swab clockwise** for 5 to 10 seconds. Withdraw the swab without touching the skin.
4. While holding the swab in the same hand, unscrew the cap from the tube. Do not spill the contents of the tube. If the contents of the tube are spilled, use a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.
5. Immediately place the swab into the transport tube so that the score line is at the top of the tube.
6. Carefully break the swab shaft at the score line against the side of the tube.
7. Immediately discard the top portion of the swab shaft.
8. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube.
9. Write first and last name, date of birth, and collection date on the tube.

Pharyngeal Swab Specimens Collection and Handling

Note: For patient-collected throat swab specimen collection, ensure that patients read the Patient Collection Instructions before providing them with a collection kit.

Instructions for throat swab specimen collection:

1. Partially peel open the swab package. Remove the swab. Do not touch the soft tip or lay the swab down. If the soft tip is touched, the swab is laid down, or the swab is dropped, use a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.
2. Hold the swab, placing your thumb and forefinger in the middle of the swab shaft covering the score line. Do not hold the swab shaft below the score line.
3. Carefully insert the swab into the throat ensuring contact with bilateral tonsils (if present) and the posterior pharyngeal wall, then withdraw the swab without touching the inside of the cheeks or tongue.
4. While holding the swab in the same hand, unscrew the cap from the tube. Do not spill the contents of the tube. If the contents of the tube are spilled, use a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.
5. Immediately place the swab into the transport tube so that the score line is at the top of the tube.
6. Carefully break the swab shaft at the score line against the side of the tube.
7. Immediately discard the top portion of the swab shaft.
8. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube.
9. Write first and last name, date of birth, and collection date on the tube.