



Ear Swab

Synonyms

Aural swab

Clinical Indication

Please give detailed clinical information, including date of onset/ contact with the suspected infection, and any current, or intended, antibiotic therapy

Part of Profile / See Also

Microscopy, culture for bacteria and fungi; antibiotic sensitivities on potential pathogens.

The type of cultural investigations performed may vary, dependent on the clinical information received

Request Form

[Order comms request i.e., ICE or Medway](#) or [clearly handwritten](#) Microbiology form [where order comms not available](#)

Availability / Frequency of Analysis

On request during normal working hours

Turnaround Time

4 days

Patient Preparation

N/A

Sample Requirements

If there is to be a delay in transport or processing of the sample e.g., due to receipt 'out of hours', the sample should be stored at 4-8°C.

Specimen Type

Bacterial culture swab in transport medium

Samples should be transported to laboratory on day of collection.

Volume

Container

Blue or orange top bacteriology swabs are required or aspirates collected into sterile universal type container. For investigation of fungal infection, scrapings of material from the ear canal are preferred although swabs can also be used.

Reference Range & Units

N/A

Interferences

Inadequately collected specimens may result in misleading results being obtained.

Interpretation & Clinical

Positive culture results will be reported with antibiotic susceptibilities where appropriate.

Decision Value (if applicable)

References

PHE SMI [B1: Investigation of Ear Infections and Associated Specimens | Issue no: 9 | Issue date: 04.06.14](#) |

Test code

EAR

Lab Handling

Samples should be processed as soon as possible.