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# High Vaginal Swab

## Synonyms

HVS

## Clinical Indication

High vaginal swabs are NOT suitable for the isolation of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC) or the detection of *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

If gonorrhoea is suspected, send cervical and urethral swabs or, refer the patient to the Department of Genito-Urinary Medicine ([GUM](#)).

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

## Part of Profile / See Also

Current laboratory protocol requires Gram films to be put up on all HVS swabs on NON-GUM female patients aged 10-60 years. For patients aged <10 years or >60 years, Gram films are only performed if Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is suspected, or fishy/smelly discharge is indicated.

Culture for yeasts, *Trichomonas vaginalis*, if testing criteria are met, and culture for bacterial pathogens.

*Trichomonas* culture should be performed on all pregnant women, if clinically suspected, if the patient is known to have another STI, if the clinician requests it, or if clinically indicated. Symptoms to look out for are increased vaginal discharge, dysuria and pruritus. It should not be done automatically.

Do not report as GC culture negative. Only report a positive culture.

## Request Form

Order comms request i.e., ICE or Medway or clearly handwritten Microbiology forms where order comms are not available

## Availability / Frequency of Analysis

On request during normal working hours

## Turnaround Time

72 hours

## Patient Preparation

N/A

## Sample Requirements

If there is to be a delay in processing high vaginal swabs these should be kept at room temperature.

## Specimen Type

Bacterial swab in transport medium

## Volume

## Container

Samples should be transported to laboratory on day of collection.

**Reference Range & Units****Interferences**

Sample quality may deteriorate if prolonged delays in processing and isolation of fastidious organisms occur. Routine swabs are only kept for 7 days. Therefore, additional tests must be requested within that time period.

**Interpretation & Clinical****Decision Value (if applicable)****References**

UK SMI Bacteriology | B 28 | Issue no: 4.6 | Issue date: 26.04.17 |

Investigation of Genital Tract and Associated Specimens

**Test code**

GTL

**Lab Handling**

Samples should be processed as soon as possible.