



## LABORATORY BULLETIN

2006 - July- 4

#2006 - 5

To: Physicians, Laboratories, Hospitals & Clinics

Re: Changes in specimen collection devices- Flocked nasopharyngeal swabs and Universal Transport Medium

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Effective August 1, 2006, the following changes will be made to the collection devices supplied by the Provincial Laboratory:

- **Nylon flocked/plastic applicator nasopharyngeal swabs** will replace dacron and rayon/wire applicator nasopharyngeal swabs for the collection of nasopharyngeal specimens
- **Universal Transport Medium (UTM)** will replace M5 Viral Transport Medium for detection/culture of viruses, chlamydia, mycoplasma and ureaplasma

These changes are based on extensive evaluation of flocked nasopharyngeal swabs:

- with Universal Transport Medium (UTM) for the collection, transport and detection/culture of respiratory viruses
- with Regan Lowe Transport medium for the detection of *B. pertussis*

Advantages of the Flocked Nasopharyngeal swab:

- ✓ Easier to hold and manipulate by collector
- ✓ Break-off score on the shaft of the swab eliminates the requirement to cut with sterile scissors
- ✓ Absorbs & release more ciliated epithelial cells, thus improving sample integrity
- ✓ Less painful for the patient
- ✓ Compatible with molecular and culture tests

Collection of a nasopharyngeal sample with a flocked swab is the same as for the dacron/rayon swabs it is replacing. Flocked swabs are sterile and individually wrapped in a pouch format.

Advantages of UTM:

- ✓ Can be stored at room temperature
- ✓ Similar shelf life to M5 Transport Medium (1 year)
- ✓ Flat bottomed container base
- ✓ Suitable for detection/culture of viruses, chlamydia, mycoplasma and ureaplasma

**Implementation process:**

Beginning **August 1, 2006**, as current stocks of dacron/rayon wire-wound nasopharyngeal swabs and M5 Viral Transport Medium are used up, collection kits will be restocked with the new products:

- Flocked nasopharyngeal swabs with Regan Lowe transport medium will be supplied for pertussis testing.
- UTM Kits containing flocked swabs and UTM will be supplied for virus, chlamydia, mycoplasma and ureaplasma testing, replacing the Multicult Kit.
- Respiratory outbreak kits for the upcoming season (2006-2007) will contain the flocked swabs and UTM. Flocked swabs and UTM are compatible and interchangeable with the wire-wound swabs and M5 Viral Transport Medium, respectively.

**Contact:** For additional information or questions call Dr. Kevin Fonseca, Clinical Virologist at (403) 944-1263, or by e-mail at [k.fonseca@provlab.ab.ca](mailto:k.fonseca@provlab.ab.ca)



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