

DATE:	21 February 2023
TO:	South Zone Health Care Providers, Clinic Staff, and Nursing Units (excluding Chinook Regional Hospital and Medicine Hat Regional Hospital)
FROM:	DynaLIFE Medical Labs and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Replacement of Amies Swabs with ESwabs in South Zone

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Effective **February 27, 2023**, all acute care and community locations in South Zone sites, will begin transition of the current microbiology collection and transport media (Amies gel pink-top swabs) to ESwabs. This change excludes Chinook Regional Hospital (CRH) and Medicine Hat Regional Hospital (MHRH).
- **At that time, immediate replacement of Amies gel swabs with ESwabs for Group A Strep testing is required.** Routine testing of throat swabs for Group A Strep is transitioning from culture to molecular detection. Culture will continue to be performed for patients with a provided history of penicillin allergy or treatment failure. ESwabs are appropriate for both tests.
- Unused remaining supplies of Amies swabs may be returned via your DynaLIFE courier or at any DynaLIFE location.



Amies (pink-top) swab [being replaced]



new ESwab

Background

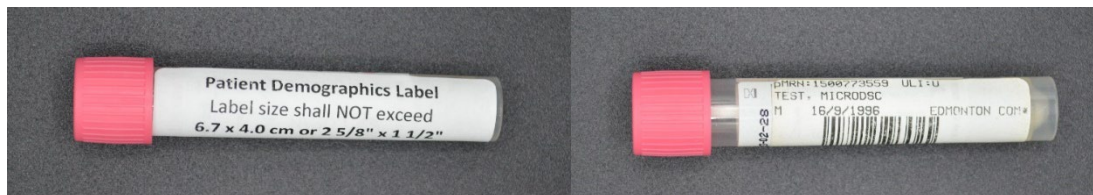
- The ESwab is appropriate for collection of most tests previously done with Amies gel swabs: e.g., routine bacterial culture, bacterial vaginosis testing, Group B Strep screening.
- The exception is Group A Strep testing, for which the Amies gel swab is **not acceptable**.
- The ESwab provides better analytical sensitivity and reproducibility for microbiological stains, cultures, and other testing.

Action Required

- To use Eswab for sample collection:
 - Hold swab above the red-marked breakpoint to prevent contamination of the lower shaft with the swab tip. This segment must be kept sterile.
 - Swab the desired area.
 - Uncap the vial, insert the swab and gently break the shaft by bending it against the rim of the vial, gently rotating to complete breakage if needed. Recap.



- Place an identification label no larger than 6.7 x 4.0 cm vertically on the vial, directly under (and not on top of) the cap (see figure below).
 - Barcodes, if present, should be perpendicular to the length of the tube.
 - **Correct labelling of ESwabs prevents processing delays.**



- Continue using pre-reduced anaerobic transport systems (PRAS), not ESwabs, for specimens that require anaerobic culture (including deep wound swabs, and small amounts of tissue, bone, and fluids). Collection of tissue or fluid is preferable to a swab.
- Do not use ESwabs for respiratory virus (including COVID-19) or pertussis testing. Continue to use Universal/Viral Transport Media and Regan-Lowe media, respectively.
- **ESwab ordering information:**
 - Community: as of Feb. 27, clinics should order the new swab through the DynaLIFE Physician Supply Portal (<https://orders.dynalife.ca>). ESwabs will not be available for ordering before that date.

DynaLIFE #	Description	Quantity
1S0118	ESWAB (FOR MICROBIOLOGY SAMPLES ONLY)	50 units/bag

- Acute Care (Hospitals, Urgent Care): Supply carts will be automatically restocked with the new product. Work with your site’s CPSM to coordinate roll-out if required.

Previous			New		
Oracle #	Description	Supplier	Oracle #	Description	Supplier
146331	SWAB COPAN PLAIN LIQUID	THE STEVENS COMPANY 896-8140CQ	364899	TUBE COLLECTION 1ML LIQUID AMIES MEDIUM WITH 1 REGULAR FLOQSWABS PINK SCREW CAP ESWAB	MICRONOSTYX INC CA480CE

Questions/Concerns may be directed to

- Pamela Churko, Microbiology Discipline Lead, Pamela.Churko@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Luiz Lisboa, Medical Microbiologist, DynaLIFE, luiz.lisboa@dynalife.ca
- DynaLIFE Materials Management Direct Line: (587) 686-3454 or supply.order@dynalife.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Dr. Dylan Pillai, Medical Director South Sector, Alberta Precision Laboratories
- Dr. Erene Farag, Medical Director, DynaLIFE Medical Laboratories