

Guidance for Candida auris Colonization Specimen Collection, Specimen Packaging, and Shipping

Candida auris colonization testing is performed by molecular methods to rapidly and accurately detect the presence of C. auris. The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services Laboratory (NDHHS) performs a Real-Time PCR assay to detect C. auris from skin swabs (combined axilla/groin swab) collected using the ESwab™ collection system. Specimens from other sources (e.g., nares, rectal, etc.) are not acceptable for testing. The turn-around time for PCR results is two business days.

- Prior approval from NDHHS Laboratory is required for point prevalence surveys before collection and shipping of specimens.
- No prior approval is needed for admission screenings.

Acceptable Specimen:

- Collect axilla (armpit)/inguinal (groin) swab in Aimes liquid media (ESwab). Swab both left and right armpit followed by left and right groin using the same swab, then place swab in the collection tube.
 - No other specimen types are acceptable to test.
 - Place each individual sample in its own biohazard bag.
- Specimens must be clearly labeled with two patient identifiers:
 - Patients' full name
 - Date of birth
 - Medical record number
 - Sample ID number
- Stability requirements:
 - Ambient: Unacceptable
 - Refrigerated (2-8°C): 4 Days
 - Frozen (-20°C or colder): >4 Days