

FecalSwab Specimen Collection Instructions

Per the manufacturer, COPAN Diagnostics, "The Copan FecalSwab Collection, Transport and Preservation System is intended for the collection of rectal swab and fecal specimens and to preserve the viability of enteric pathogenic bacteria during transport from the collection site to the testing laboratory. In the laboratory, FecalSwab specimens are processed using standard clinical laboratory operating procedures for culture."

FecalSwab Collection Instructions:

1. The stool specimen should not contain urine or water. The patient should pass the stool into a clean, dry pan or special container mounted on the toilet for this purpose. No toilet paper should be present with the sample.
2. Open the kit package and remove the tube of medium and flocked swab applicator. Touch the swab applicator only above the marked breakpoint line.
3. Collect a small sample of stool by inserting the entire tip of the flocked swab into the stool sample and rotate it. Bloody, slimy, or watery areas of stools should be selected and sampled. Verify fecal matter is present on the swab.

NOTE: Do not use a swab as a paddle or spoon, more as a probe. The swab tip only needs to be coated with sample material.
4. Alternatively – a rectal swab can be collected. Insert the flocked swab through the rectal sphincter 2 to 3 cm (1-1.5 inches) and gently rotate. Withdraw and examine to be sure fecal matter is visible.
5. Transfer the swab into the tube with the preservation medium and visually check maximum fill line is not exceeded. Holding the swab shaft between thumb and finger, mash and mix the stool specimen against the side of the tube to evenly disperse and suspend the specimen in the preservative.
6. Holding the tube away from your face, hold the swab shaft close to the rim of the tube and bend it to break off at the marked breakpoint. Discard the broken upper part of the swab shaft. Securely tighten and close the cap.
7. Shake until the sample appears homogenous.
8. Label the tube appropriately.



Cautionary Notes per the manufacturer:

The patient should be cautioned against the use of antacids, barium, bismuth, anti-diarrheal medication, antibiotics, histamine, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, or oily laxatives prior to collection of the specimen.

It must be assumed that all specimens contain infectious micro-organisms and materials used to process them should be considered potentially infectious. Therefore, they must be handled with appropriate precautions and dispose according to laboratory regulations for infectious waste.

Do not use if the swab is visibly damaged.

Do not use excessive force or pressure when collecting the specimen from patients as this may result in breakage of the swab shaft.

If sample collected exceeds maximum fill line, discard the swab and tube. A second specimen should be collected using a new Copan FecalSwab kit.

It is recommended to transfer the sample to the laboratory within 2 hours of collection time. If immediately delivery or processing is delayed, then specimens should be:

- Refrigerated at 2 – 8°C and processed within 72 hours
- Or
- Stored at room temperature 20-25°C and processed within 48 hours

In the case of *C. difficile* culture investigation, the specimens should be:

- Refrigerated at 2 – 8°C and processed within 48 hours
- Or
- Stored at room temperature 20-25°C and processed within 24 hours