

SAFETY AND BEST PRACTICE



Cover cuts or abrasions on your hands with adhesive dressing.



Wear gloves when collecting and handling stool specimens.



Wash your hands after handling stool specimens.



Adhere to proper waste disposal procedures.

Apply best practices for privacy and patient care.

PAY ATTENTION

- Bleach and other disinfectants can kill the bacterium and lead to incorrect test results. Make sure bedpans and buckets are washed, disinfected, rinsed thoroughly with clean water and dried before use.
- Verify patient identity and label all sample containers with patient ID and date of collection..

STOOL COLLECTION

Materials Required

Clean container: a wide biodegradable paper cup or a bucket/bedpan or a new plastic bag (like zip-lock bag)

Procedure

Able patients should be instructed to:

- Urinate before using the container or bag
- Pass stool in the container or bag

For bed-ridden patients:

- Place the bedpan or bucket under the hole of the cholera bed or under the patient
- Collect freshly passed stool

TRANSFER OF PRIMARY STOOL SPECIMEN TO SECONDARY CONTAINER

To transfer stool to a stool cup

Materials Required

Stool cup with spoon, spatula or swab

Procedure

- Can be performed by the staff or a patient if adequately instructed
- Transfer stool from initial container into a stool cup using the provided spoon, sterile spatula, or swab
- Empty leftover stool into the toilet, latrine or sewage pit
- Leave the dirty container in a designated location or throw away the bag in a biohazard bin
- Remove gloves and wash hands
- Return the filled stool cup to the healthcare worker



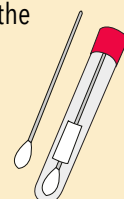
To transfer stool to a faecal swab (eg. Cary Blair swab)

Materials Required

Swab, tube of transport medium

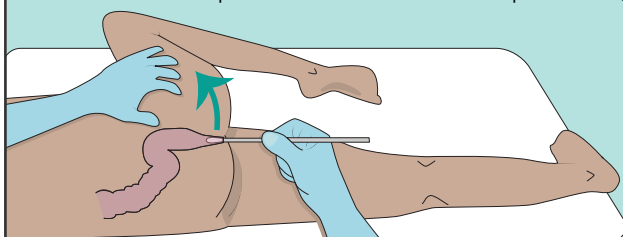
Procedure

- Use a sterile cotton or polyester-tipped swab
- Dip swab and swirl it in the stool
- Use the swab to sample any mucus or tissue fragments, if present
- **For transport:** place swab, tip first, all the way in the tube of transport medium
- **For RDT:** do not place swab in transport medium, continue immediately with RDT



RECTAL SWAB COLLECTION

If a patient is unable to produce stool, a rectal swab may be collected. This is rarely needed as cholera patients tend to produce high volumes of liquid stool. Rectal swabs are not used to perform RDT, unless additional steps are taken (enrichment).



Materials Required

1 or 2 swabs, tube of transport medium

Procedure

- Moisten the swabs in sterile transport medium or sterile saline
- Insert the swabs through the rectal sphincter 3–4 cm
- Rotate for 5 to 10 seconds, and withdraw with care
- Examine to ensure there is visible faecal material on the swabs
- Place swabs, tip first, in the same tube of transport medium

Further processing of specimens may be required as described in Job Aid [Specimen packaging and domestic transportation for laboratory confirmation of *Vibrio cholerae* 01/O139](#). Any specimen transported to the laboratory, should be accompanied by a [Laboratory Referral Form for Cholera Suspected Case](#).