

Guide to Wound Swabbing



1 Pre-Procedure

- Introduce yourself to the patient, explain and discuss the procedure with them, and gain their consent to proceed.
- Wash hands and don PPE.
- Open dressing pack, remove current dressing and cleanse the wound using warm sterile saline or potable water. Debride non-viable tissue as required, in line with local pathway.
- Remove gloves and decontaminate hands. Don sterile gloves from dressing pack.

2 Procedure

- Ensure the swab is within the expiry date and remove swab from outer packaging.
- Obtain the sample from the cleanest area of the wound bed. Where possible, do not obtain the sample from superficial pus, slough or necrotic tissue.
- If the wound is dry, the tip of the swab should be moistened with 0.9% sodium chloride.
- Using an aseptic technique, firmly press the swab down into the selected area of 1cm² of the wound bed and rotate the swab for 5 seconds to express fluid from the tissue.
- If pus is present, it should be aspirated using a sterile syringe and decanted into a sterile specimen pot.
- Use a separate swab for each wound.
- Carefully place swab into plastic transport tube, ensuring it is fully immersed in the transport medium. Ensure cap is firmly secured.
- Redress the wound, if applicable, as per patient care plan.
- Remove gloves and apron, discard all clinical waste and wash and/or decontaminate hands.

3 Post Procedure

- Label the sample correctly with patient's details, date and time sample was taken, an accurate location of, and type of wound.
- Include additional detail on the request form, the more information provided to the lab, the more specific testing can be undertaken:
 - Clinical history (e.g. If the person is diabetic or other comorbidities)
 - Underlying cause of the wound (e.g. pressure ulceration or peripheral disease)
 - Duration the wound has been present
 - Current antibiotic therapy and other relevant medication
 - depth if wound is probing
- Package swab and transfer to microbiology, department as per local policy.
- Dispose of waste appropriately.
- Document the wound assessment, measurements and procedure performed.