

Instructions for Taking Samples

Surface Sampling (Swabs and Tape lifts):

Suspect surfaces should be sampled by rubbing area with sterile cotton swabs. The area swabbed should be noted in the documentation. If the sampled area cannot be measured, it should be recorded in the documentation and the results will be reported as CFU per swab. The swabs should be placed in sterile plastic containers, which are then sealed and labeled for shipment.

If the surface sample is taken concurrently with a tape lift, this should be designated as a tape slide/surface (swab) combination sample. The tape lift technique involves the use of clear tape that contacts a suspect surface. The tape is affixed to a glass slide and placed in a plastic container, sealed and labeled. In addition to the tape slide sample, surface (or swab) samples (as described above) are retrieved from the same area that the tape slide is taken. The swab should be placed in sterile plastic containers, sealed and labeled.

See figure 1; (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) for swab and tape lift sampling techniques. Also see chapter 12 of the American Council of Government Industrial Hygienists text: "Bioaerosols, assessment and control". ACGIH 1999.

Tape lift samples



(d)



(e)

Take a section of clear adhesive tape and hold as shown. Impress tape over affected area. Then pull tape off. Secure tape on to the inside of a new resealable plastic bag.

Swab Sample

Figure 1



(a)



(b)

Apply swab to affected area. Roll swab over affected area.



(c)

Insert swab into a new sealable plastic bag and label with location, date, and your name or identification number.

Bulk Sampling:

Bulk samples can be taken if it is not practical to take swab and/or tape samples. Examples could be the interior insulation of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) ductwork or systems or parts of floor coverings. These samples should be placed into a clean and preferably sterile container (e.g., plastic bags), which is then sealed and labeled for shipment.

Shipping:

Once all sampling is completed, the samples should be transported, along with the proper documentation and chain of custody (COC) paperwork, as quickly as possible to Dr. David C. Straus's Center for Indoor Air Research at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, TTUHSC for incubation and identification.