

Gynae Triple swabs

Background

Infections by site and Type (basic categorisation)				
	External Skin	Vagina	EndoCervix	PID
Bacterial		BV TV (protozoa)	GC Chlamydia	GC Chlamydia
fungal	Candida	Candida		
Viral	HPV HSV		HPV HSV	

In general, vaginal infections (BV, TV, Candida) cause a lot of discharge compared with cervical infections (GC, Chlam).

Swabs

In a setting outside a sexual health clinic, three swabs ("*triple swabs*") are usually taken to screen for infection in symptomatic women. Note that most infections should be diagnosed on history and examination with confirmation from laboratory investigations.

Swab 1 "HVS"	Stuarts Medium	Posterior Fornix	TV, BV ("heavy growth of anaerobes"), Candida (& grp B strep)
Swab 2 "ECS"	Stuart's Medium	Endocervix	GC
Swab 3 "Chlamydia"	Chlam swab	Endocervix (cells)	Chlamydia

Stuarts medium is basically agar and charcoal, and is a standard transport medium for most microbiological specimens.

Chlamydia is an obligate intracellular parasite. It can be identified by immunological techniques (eg ELISA, or direct Immunofluorescence), tissue culture or DNA amplification (PCR, etc). The swab used will depend on the method of identification used in each particular hospital. Swabs should be taken from the endocervix, and need to be taken in a particular way (usually rotated within the endocervix for 10 or 20 seconds) in order to obtain cells.

Samples should be properly labelled including site of swab. The request form should list symptoms and signs, recent antibiotics, as well as the site of swabs and infections that you would like the lab to screen for.