



Frequently Asked Questions



What is ESwab™?

ESwab™ is a liquid-based multipurpose collection and transport system for Microbiology. It consists of a flocked swab and a tube containing 1mL of liquid Amies.

What is a flocked swab?

In contrast to a traditional fiber swab, which comprises of a fiber wad in which sample can get trapped, a flocked swab has no internal core. The plastic applicator is sprayed with Nylon® fibers forming a soft, velvet brush that allows for improved collection of cell samples. Capillary action between the Nylon® fiber strands facilitates strong hydraulic uptake of liquid samples. Sample stays close to the surface allowing fast and complete elution.

What does the “e” in ESwab™ stand for?

Elute! The flocked swab allows for fast and complete elution of samples.

What types of bacteria does ESwab™ support?

ESwab™ is FDA cleared for collection, preservation and transport of specimens to maintain viability of aerobic, anaerobic and fastidious bacteria at refrigerator and room temperature.

How long does ESwab™ support bacteria?

Up to 48 hours at room and refrigerator temperature. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* survival is 24 hours in full compliance with CLSI M40-A: Quality Control of Microbiological Transport System standard.

What are the stability and transport requirements of ESwab™?

Samples should be transported to the laboratory as soon as possible. If immediate delivery or processing is delayed, then specimens should be refrigerated at 4 – 8°C or stored at room temperature (20 – 25°C) and processed within 48 hours, except for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* cultures, which should be processed within 24 hours per the CLSI standard.

What is the shelf life?

15 months

I’ve heard that ESwab™ is a multipurpose transport system. What does this mean?

ESwab™ is a versatile collection and transport system, which can be used for traditional culture for aerobes, anaerobes, and fastidious bacteria. Independent studies have shown ESwab™ successfully used for recovery of mycobacteria, fungi and trichomonas. Studies available upon request. Additionally, ESwab™ can be used for Gram stains, automation, rapid antigen testing* and molecular assays*.

* Always read the manufacturer’s package insert for specific instructions regarding specimen collection and transport for the type of test kit being used.

Can ESwab™ be used for multiple tests?

Yes! Because ESwab™ provides 1mL of homogenous liquid sample, it provides up to 10 aliquots of identical sample to perform multiple tests.

Can ESwab™ be used for manual plating?

Yes! Manual plating can be performed either by using the swab to inoculate or by using a sterile pipette and inoculating sample onto the media.

Can ESwab™ be used for Gram stains?

Yes! ESwab™ creates more consistent Gram stains since it provides a more homogenous suspension than standard swabs. ESwab™ should be vortexed for 5 seconds, then using a sterile pipet, transfer 30 µL (1-2 drops) of the sample. Methanol fixation is recommended.

Can ESwab™ be used for molecular applications and rapid antigen tests?

Always consult manuals, product inserts and instructions for use for the appropriate use of all products. ESwab™ has been increasingly qualified by leading assay manufacturers for use with their molecular and rapid antigen tests. A list of these tests can be viewed at the COPAN website, or contact communications@copanusa.net. ESwab™ has been used successfully for rapid antigen testing and for molecular-based assays with self-verification. To learn more about ESwab™ versatile use, visit the scientific studies section of this website.

Does ESwab™ work with automation?

Yes! ESwab™ is approved for use with WASP®. For compatibility of ESwab™ with other automated platforms please refer to the documentation from the respective manufacturer.

How is the sample collected using ESwab™?

At point of care, the ESwab™ cap is unscrewed and removed. After the sample is collected from the patient, the swab is inserted to the bottom of the ESwab™ tube and the swab shaft is broken at the marked, molded break point. The cap is screwed back onto the tube. The sample is labeled and sent to the lab.

What is the benefit of the ESwab™ capture cap?

The capture cap feature allows the operator to conveniently remove the swab and perform various microbiology analyses using the cap as a handle to hold and manipulate the swab.

Must the swab be used to perform my tests?

No. Because the sample is eluted into the media, the specimen is in the liquid, not on the swab. While the swab may be used as a transfer device, many laboratories prefer a loop or a transfer pipet to take an aliquot for testing.

Does COPAN hold a patent for flocked swabs?

Yes, COPAN is the inventor of flocked swabs and holds patents in the United States, Europe, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and China.

What are the most common types of ESwab™?

There are 3 swabs types.

- Regular size flocked swab (white cap, 480C)
- Minitip flocked swab (green cap, 481C)
- Minitip flexible flocked swab (blue cap, 482C)

Different size swabs may be appropriate for different collection sites. For example, minitip swabs may be more appropriate for smaller collection sites or pediatric sample collections.