

Environmental Swabbing Instructions

3M™ pre-hydrated Hydra-Sponge



Wash hands with soap & water before handling swabbing materials

1. Before opening, shake the sponge to the end of the bag.
2. Aseptically tear the top perforated plastic strip away from the metal rim.
3. Push sponge toward the opening by manipulating it from the outside of the bag. Do not touch the inside of the bag at this point.
4. Open the mouth of the bag by pulling on the white tabs on the outside.
5. Put on sterile gloves. Place it on the hand by touching only the sleeve end of the glove. At no time should anything touch the outside of the glove fingers.
6. Place the gloved hand inside of the bag and remove the sponge. Gently squeeze out any excess hydrating fluid from the sponge into the bag.
7. Swipe the sponge in a tight pattern across the surface
8. Repeat at a perpendicular angle across the same surface, taking care to ensure sponge does not dry out. Use additional sponges as needed.
9. Place the sponge back into the bag. Remove and dispose the glove.
10. Without touching the opening of the bag, press from the outside to expel excess air and fold bag closed.
11. Fold the metal flaps over to seal the bag.

Considerations

Please ensure swabs are received for testing the same day or the following day after collection and that swabs are stored under refrigerated conditions until either picked up or shipped in insulated packaging with blue ice.

For every sponge used, the sample submission form should include a swab site identifier to appear on the laboratory certificate of analysis.

A separate swab should be provided for each pathogen requested (*Listeria*, *Salmonella*, etc.) while a single swab can be submitted for multiple indicator organisms (i.e. aerobic plate count & coliforms). The practice of splitting swabs for multiple tests should be avoided as each swab may have uneven distribution, compromising the recovery of target organisms.