

# *Bordetella pertussis* (Whooping Cough)

## Supplemental Information

The Bacteriology Section performs PCR for *Bordetella*. Nasopharyngeal aspirates along with swabs are acceptable specimens. Specimens may be sent from public and private health care providers.

Dacron or Sterile Flock Swabs are superior to other types of swabs and should be used to collect specimens as follows: pass swab very gently through the nostril until it reaches the posterior nares and leave in place for 15 to 30 seconds (this may induce a cough and in practice only a few seconds may be possible).

### Specimen Processing

1. Nasopharyngeal aspirates should be placed into a sterile leak proof container with a minimum volume of 500 ul for required for testing.
2. Nasopharyngeal Puritan Dry Collection System (Sterile Flock) Swabs provided by the SDPHL may be collected and sent as soon as possible in their own collection kit.

### Specimen Identification

1. Complete **all** the provider and patient information sections on the SDPHL requisition slips.
2. Label each specimen with the date of collection and the patient's first and last name. Unlabeled specimens or specimens where the patient identifier on the specimen does not match the identifier on the form **will not be tested.**

### Reporting and Interpretation of Results

PCR, culture or direct FA procedures are recommended for diagnosis of *B. pertussis* whenever possible. False negative culture results may occur from any procedures that render the organisms nonviable, such as improper handling of plates and transport medium after collection or prolonged antibiotic treatment prior to collection of the specimen.

### Criteria for Unacceptable Specimens

#### All specimens

1. Specimen not labeled.
2. The patient identifier on the specimen did not match the identifier on the form.
3. The specimen was broken in transit.
4. Out-dated collection kit.
5. Quantity of nasopharyngeal aspirate not sufficient.
6. The specimen did not arrive in appropriate temperature transport range.