



Diagnostic  
Pathology  
Medical  
Group, Inc.

## ANAL-RECTAL CYTOLOGY SPECIMENS SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

Anal-rectal cytology is utilized in the evaluation of HIV related disease of the anal canal, particularly in high risk populations. This is a simple procedure which can be done without direct visualization. No special preparation of the patient is necessary. There is no definitive literature on the appropriate sampling device to use but according to Darragh, et. al. (as reported in *The Bethesda System for Reporting Cervical Cytology*, p 169), the Dacron swab is recommended over the cotton swab because it releases the harvested cells more readily.

- Obtain the material by inserting a Dacron swab well moistened with tap water 5 – 6 cm into the anal canal and into the rectal vault.
- Apply firm lateral pressure to the swab handle while rotating and slowly withdrawing from the anal canal, inscribing a cone-shaped arc.
- Ensure that the transition zone is sampled; a swab or smear of the peri-anal skin is an unsatisfactory sample.
- A cytobrush may be used in place of the Dacron swab, but may be more uncomfortable for the patient.
- Avoid using cotton swabs on a wooden stick because the handle may break and splinter during collection.

If a liquid Pap vial is available:

- Place the swab/brush into the preservative vial and agitate vigorously several times to release the cellular harvest.

If not available:

- Smear the swab onto a glass slide and spray-fix as per procedure for conventional cervical Pap smears.

- Fill out the DPMG cytology requisition, including the following information:

- patient's date of birth
- patient's unique identification number (SS or medical record number)
- physician's address
- phone number and FAX number
- cc doctor(s)
- clinical history
- special instructions, as applicable
- insurance information

***Without the necessary information, we are unable to process the specimens in an expeditious manner. We may call you for verification, and in some instances, we may return the specimen to you for proper labeling. This is necessary to assure that the service we provide for your patients is of the most accurate and excellent quality we can provide.***

- Place the specimen and requisition in the plastic DPMG bag provided. There are separate pockets for the paperwork and the specimen.

References:

CAP Today, "The ABCs of Anal-rectal Cytology", Teresa M.Darragh, M.D. and Barbara Winkler, M.D. May 2004, pp 42 –50.

The Bethesda System for Reporting Cervical Cytology, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Diane Solomon, M.D. and Ritu Nayor, M.D. editors, Springer-Verlag, New York, 2004, p 169.