

June 9, 2026

Dear OSPHL CT/GC Testing Clients,

The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) is writing to provide you with important tips to reduce Unsatisfactory results for Chlamydia/gonorrhea (CT/GC) specimens. A recent quality monitoring activity revealed several common reasons for incorrect specimen submissions for CT/GC testing that are prevalent among many submitting facilities.

Complete specimen collection details, including patient and provider education materials to help with each of these tips, are available on the [OSPHL Chlamydia/Gonorrhea Test Menu page](#).

Please review the tips below to ensure that OSPHL can test as many specimens you send as possible. Please share this information with colleagues who implement these practices in your facility.

### **Tip 1: Check facilities for and discard expired collection devices.**

Check all areas of your facility for expired collection devices. Discard expired devices and order new kits using the OSPHL Collection Supplies Request Form, available at <https://bit.ly/phl-forms>.

Nearly one in five unsatisfactory specimens during the quality monitoring period were collected into expired collection devices.

### **Tip 2: Use the correct collection kit for the specimen source.**

OSPHL uses different collection devices for rectal and pharyngeal specimens than other labs. For these specimen sources, make sure to use the Unisex collection kit with the white label.



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### **Tip 3: Provide patient education for patient-collected specimens.**

Instruct patients that the fluid (media) inside the collection tubes should stay in the tube and not be poured out. Most specimens resulted as Unsatisfactory for insufficient media quantities were for patient-collected specimen sources.

Remove the cleaning swab from the collection kit before giving it to a patient for collection. Check to make sure the correct swab is in the collection tube before the patient leaves the facility. Most specimens resulted as Unsatisfactory for not having a swab or having the incorrect swab were for patient-collected specimens.

### **Tip 4: Provide staff education on urine transfer into collection tubes.**

Train staff to fill the volume of urine in the collection tube between the two fill lines. Urine volume cannot be above or below the fill lines.

About one in eight unsatisfactory specimens during the quality monitoring period had the incorrect volume of urine in the collection tube.



Addressing each of these topics should reduce most Unsatisfactory specimen submissions, reducing the need to collect extra specimens from patients. Be sure to review specimen collection requirements and access patient and provider education materials on the OSPHL Lab Test Menu at [www.healthoregon.org/labtests](http://www.healthoregon.org/labtests).

Please contact OSPHL with questions at 503-693-4100.

Sincerely,

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