



TZANCK SMEARS

INDICATIONS:

Direct examination of inflammatory/infectious processes of the skin primarily for the detection of mucocutaneous Herpes Simplex Virus infection.

SPECIMEN:

Direct smear of material collected from a skin lesion, usually a vesicle.

SUPPLIES:

1. Two (or more) glass slides (single-end frosted)
2. Fixative (95% alcohol)
3. Skin scraping spatula.
4. Specimen Requisition
5. Specimen Bag with a biohazard label

COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

1. Label the slides (use lead pencil) with the patient's name.
2. Locate the vesicle on the skin. Using sterile technique, open the vesicle and gently scrape the area of abnormality with a skin scraping spatula or sterile collection brush. Scrape both at the base of the vesicle and around the rim.
3. Quickly and evenly smear the collected material on one of the glass slides. Immediately immerse the slide into 95% alcohol fixative. If alcohol is not available, the smears may be air dried and submitted to the laboratory. Repeat the process with the second slide and for additional areas if necessary.
4. Submit the specimen and requisition form to CPA.

Complete test requisition including last and first name of patient, patient's date of birth and social security number, body site and source of specimen collected. Label specimen container (using the labels provided on the requisition) with patient's first name and last name, and body site/source. The container must have at least two (2) unique identifiers. Examples of unique identifiers: patient name, DOB, unique bar code, etc. Include pertinent clinical information, i.e., previous malignancy, radiation therapy, drugs, etc. Place container in a specimen bag with a biohazard label. Place the requisition in the side pocket of the specimen bag.