

National Children's Study Vaginal Swab Self Collection Instructions

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Open the towelette and gently clean the outside of your vagina.
3. Remove one swab from its wrapping, being careful not to touch the soft part of the swab.
4. Using the hand that you write with, hold the handle of the swab between your thumb and two fingers, about one inch from the end of the handle (as you would a tampon) so that the soft part of the swab is pointing toward you.
5. With your other hand, gently open the outside of your vagina and insert the soft end of the swab into the opening. Try not to touch any other part of your genitals.
6. Hold the swab steady and straight. Slowly and gently insert the swab about 2 inches into your vagina (like you would a tampon) so that it follows the natural path of your vagina.
7. Turn the swab around inside your vagina for 10 to 30 seconds. Try not to let the swab slip out when you are turning it and make sure the swab touches the walls of the vagina so moisture is absorbed by the swab.
8. You may feel gentle pressure or a tickling sensation when you turn the swab. If you feel uncomfortable:
 - Do not push the swab inside the vagina quite as hard, or
 - Stop the procedure.
9. Remove the swab from your vagina, again holding the outside of your vagina and taking care not to touch other parts of the genitals.
10. Place the swab directly into the plastic container until the end of the swab touches the bottom of the container. Try to do this without brushing the swab against the rim or the sides of the container.
11. Repeat steps 3–10 for the each of the swabs. When you are done, there should be three swabs. **Do not put the caps on the vials.**
12. **Wash your hands and bring the vials to the interviewer.**



Thank you for providing these samples!