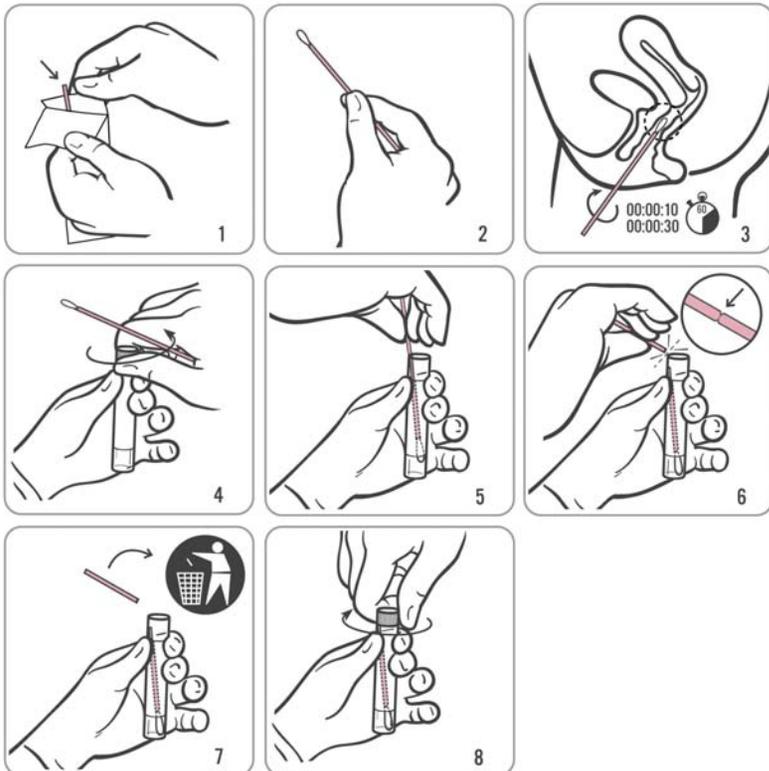


Self-Collected Vaginal Swabs for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia

Women who do not need a pelvic exam as part of their clinic evaluation may be screened for chlamydia and gonorrhea by providing a self-collected vaginal swab.

Your healthcare provider should give you instructions and make sure you understand what to do before you start. This page explains the procedure.



(Illustrations courtesy of Gen-Probe Incorporated, San Diego CA)

To collect a vaginal swab for gonorrhea/chlamydia testing:

1. Thoroughly wash your hands before starting. Undress from the waist down.
2. Read the instructions for using the test kit.
3. Open the kit package and set the tube of liquid to the side (do not open tube).
4. Partially peel open the swab package as directed, exposing the stick end of the swab (see picture 1).

IMPORTANT: Do not touch the soft tip of the swab or lay the swab down. If the soft tip is touched, the swab is laid down, or the swab is dropped, ask for a new test kit.

5. Remove the swab from the package carefully; do not lay it down.
6. Hold the swab in the middle of the stick (shaft) with your thumb and forefinger (see picture 2).
7. Carefully insert the soft tip end of the swab into your vagina about 2 inches (5 cm) past the opening of the vagina (see picture 3). Gently rotate the swab for 10 to 30 seconds, making sure the swab touches the walls of the vagina so that moisture is absorbed by the swab.
8. Withdraw the swab without touching your skin.
9. While still holding the swab, carefully unscrew the cap from the tube of liquid. Do not spill the contents of the tube. (See picture 4.)
10. Immediately place the swab into the tube so that the soft tip of the swab is visible below the tube label. (See picture 5.)
11. Carefully break the swab shaft at the scoreline (dented line around middle of stick), being careful not to spill the liquid in the tube (picture 6). Leave the soft end of the swab in the tube and throw away the top portion of the swab shaft (picture 7). Tightly screw the cap onto the tube (picture 8).
12. If the contents of the tube are spilled or the tip of the swab touches anything, ask for a new test kit.
13. Return the tube as instructed by the nurse or doctor.