

### COLLECTION OF CORNEAL SCRAPINGS FOR CULTURE

#### Collection of Specimens for Microbiology

Proper transport and storage of specimens are prerequisites for reliable culture results. Ensure that the requisition and specimen are labeled with:

- patient's full name
- date of birth or health card number
- **source of specimen**
- date of collection
- time of collection

The examination requested should be specified on the requisition.

Information concerning anti-microbial therapy or allergy, pregnancy, clinical diagnosis, or underlying disease should also be noted.

Specimens should be transported promptly to LifeLabs Laboratory. Delays to processing, beyond the recommended acceptable holding times, will compromise culture results.

All specimens and body fluids are considered potentially hazardous. They should be treated as if capable of causing disease. Clinical information or patient history as provided by the physician determines the scope of the laboratory investigation by ensuring that all laboratory services are relevant or adequate for each clinical situation.

#### Corneal Scrapings

Corneal scrapings are obtained by the physician using aseptic technique and ideally should be inoculated at the time of collection directly onto the appropriate media and slides for the diagnosis of keratitis. The physician should prepare two or three slides per eye. The agar plates are inoculated by lightly streaking both sides of the spatula over the surface to produce a row of separate inoculation marks ("C streaks").

Ophthalmologists should contact LifeLabs at 1-877-849-3637 at least 24 hours in advance for approval and shipment of appropriate media and slides.