



Collection of a self-taken penile swab

11 May 2020

Important note

This information leaflet is for complainants of sexual assault only and should not be used when considering samples from suspects.

Collection of a self-taken penile swab

Self-taken swabs are not suitable for everyone.

The police may ask you to take these, but before you do so, you should (must) have a discussion with a forensic doctor or nurse.

Please do not open any of the packets until you have read this information.

If you are not sure what to do ask the forensic doctor or nurse to whom you have been speaking.

If you have been asked to also take a swab from a different part of your body, it doesn't matter which swab you take first, BUT, you must carefully remove the gloves and wash your hands before taking the other swab and make sure the swabs go into the correctly labelled bags.

In the pack provided to you, you will find two bags.

- One bag labelled 'Penile shaft swabs'
- Second bag labelled 'Coronal sulcus/glans swabs'

Each bag will have two swabs in it.

There will also be a small bottle of sterile water, some gloves, and a folded piece of sterile paper.

These instructions tell you how to take the swabs.

The swabs you have in the bag may look different to the ones in the pictures below. Please do not worry as your swabs have been carefully prepared for you to use, by a forensic doctor or nurse.

These instructions tell you how to collect penile swabs.



What is a self-taken penile swab?

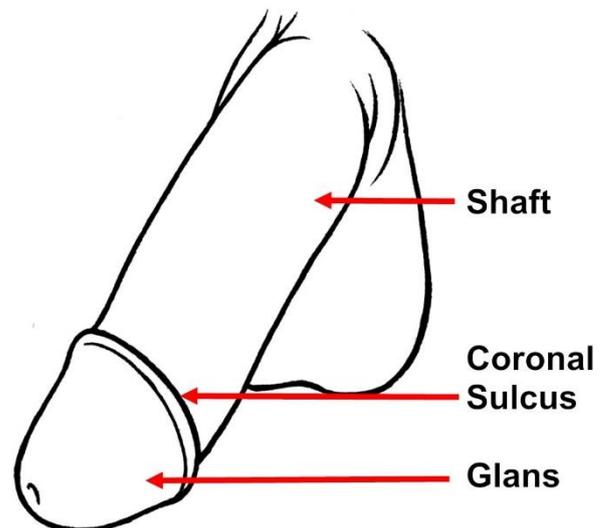
This is a penile swab taken by the patient themselves rather than by a forensic doctor or nurse.

What is the purpose of the penile swab?

The purpose of this swab is to collect DNA evidence.

Where are swabs taken from?

The first pair of swabs are taken from the penile shaft and the second pair are from the glans (the head of the penis).



Before you collect the sample

Wash your hands using soap and warm water, rinse and dry. Undress to expose the penis and get yourself into a comfortable position.

Put on 2 pairs of gloves which have been supplied to you.

If you touch or drop the swab tip or the swab is laid down, discard the swab and use another one (a spare swab is provided)

Obtaining a self-taken penile swab

Follow the process on page 2 of this document

Where is my sample tested?

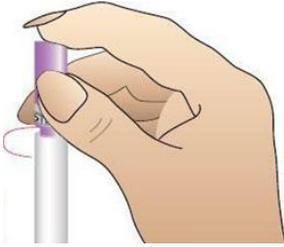
The sample will be taken and stored by the police. They will arrange for the sample to be tested dependent on the details of the case.

How do I get my results?

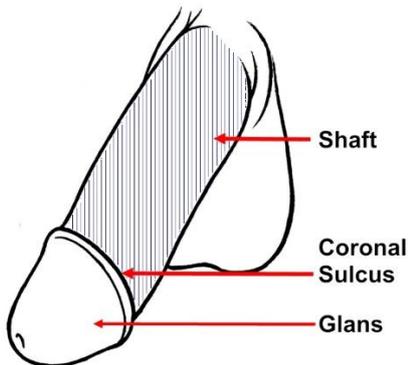
The results will go directly to the police



How to collect a penile swab



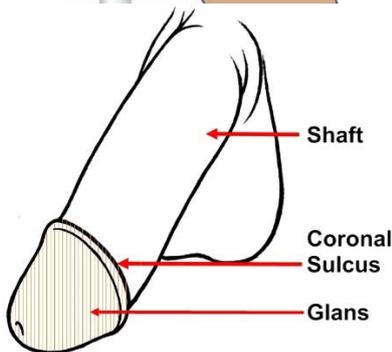
1. Wash your hands
2. Unfold the sterile paper onto a clean surface
3. Put the bottle of water and the unopened swabs onto the paper
4. Wearing two pairs of gloves on each hand open the sterile water container by twisting the top off.
5. Pick up the swab labelled 'Penile shaft wet/moist'
6. Still wearing the gloves, twist the cap to break the seal. Do not use this swab if the seal was already broken or damaged. Holding only the stopper, pull the cap with the attached swab out of the tube. Be careful not to touch anything except the area that you are swabbing.



7. With your other hand, drop no more than 3 or 4 drops of the sterile water onto the cotton swab, being careful not to let the container touch the swab.
8. Gently roll the cotton tip of the swab over the skin of the shaft of the penis right the way around (the shaded area in the diagram to the left).



9. Place the swab in the tube and cap it securely.
10. **Repeat steps 6, 8 & 9** with the 'Penile shaft dry' swab, but **do not** use sterile water with this one
11. Place both swabs into the sample bag labelled 'penile shaft swabs'



12. Still wearing your gloves, pick up the swab labelled 'Penile glans/coronal sulcus wet/moist'
13. With your other hand, drop no more than 3 or 4 drops of the sterile water onto the cotton swab, being careful not to let the container touch the swab.
14. If you have a foreskin, pull it back to expose the glans (head) of the penis. (If you have been circumcised then the glans will already be exposed)
15. Gently roll the cotton tip of the swab over the entire glans and the groove (coronal sulcus) between the shaft and the head of the penis (the shaded area to the left) the swab should not be placed into the opening at the tip of the penis



16. Place the swab in the tube and cap securely.
17. **Repeat steps 15 & 16** using the swab labelled 'Penile glans/coronal sulcus dry'
18. Place both swabs into the sample bag labelled 'Penile glans/coronal sulcus swabs'
19. Remove your outer layer of gloves and place in the sample bag labelled 'Gloves used for penile swabs'
20. The inner layer of gloves can be thrown away
21. Wash your hands

If you have been asked to take other swabs make sure that your hands are washed and dried before putting on fresh pairs of gloves.