

Sexual Offenses

*I*t is essential to have the victim(s) examined by a medical professional as soon as possible after the assault and before the affected areas (pubic area, vagina, rectum, etc.) or clothing are washed or cleaned.

I. Evidence Collection Kit

The Laboratory has made available the Medical-Forensic Evidence Collection Kit (formally known as and still referred to as Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit) to assist attending medical professionals in collecting specimens required by the Laboratory in sexual assault cases.

This kit contains detailed instructions that should be used to collect appropriate samples from both male and female sexual assault victims and suspects. This evidence can be collected up to 120 hours after the assault.

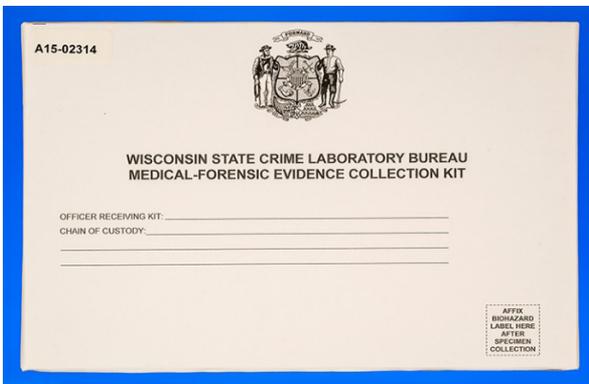


Fig. 7-1 Medical-Forensic Evidence Collection Kit

This kit can be obtained by authorized customers at no charge from Document Sales (<https://docsales.wi.gov>).

NOTE: USE STERILE SWABS WHEN COLLECTING EVIDENCE OR STANDARDS.

Collecting a Buccal Swab Standard

Prior to collecting the sample, have the person rinse his or her mouth with water. Using one swab, place the swab in solid contact with the inner cheek and gum surface. Gently move the cotton tip in and out five or six times rotating the swab while rubbing. A slight indentation should appear on the exterior of the cheek if the correct pressure is being applied. Repeat this process with a second swab on the other inner cheek and gum surface. Allow swabs to thoroughly air dry. Package the swabs together in a clean, properly labeled paper envelope and seal.

DO NOT COLLECT FROM THE TEETH OR ALONG THE EDGES OF THE TEETH.

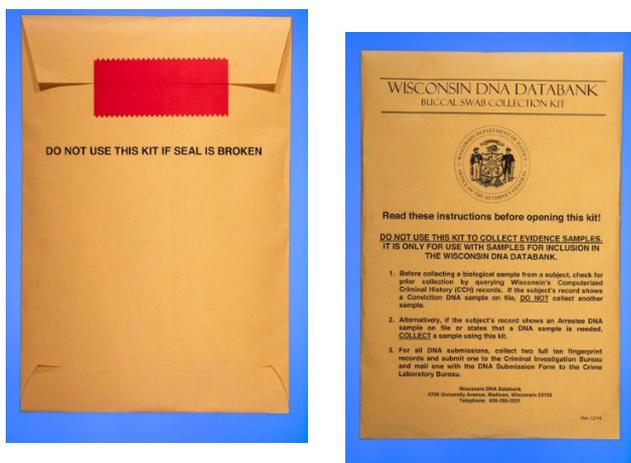


Fig. 7-2 Buccal Swab Collection Kit



Fig. 7-3 Inside the Buccal Swab Collection Kit

II. Transitory Evidence Collection

Fingernail Scraping

When there is reason to believe evidence may exist under the patient's fingernails such as blood, skin, hair, fibers, etc., the fingernails should be gently scraped with a wood or plastic applicator stick or toothpick into a clean, paper envelope. Alternatively, the fingernails can be clipped and the clippings placed into the envelope. Each hand should be done separately (**not** each finger). Properly label and seal each envelope.

Fingernail swabbings can be used if the fingernails are short. Moisten the swab with sterile water and swab the front edge of the fingernails. Use one swab for each hand. Allow the swab to thoroughly **air dry**. Package the swabs in a clean, properly labeled paper envelope and seal.

Finger Swab(s) (Suspects Only)

If the victim was digitally assaulted, the suspect's finger(s) should be swabbed with a swab (one per hand) moistened with sterile water. Follow the wet swab with a dry swab ("two swab method"). Allow swabs to thoroughly **air dry**. Package the dried swabs in a clean, properly labeled paper envelope and seal.

Bite Marks

Bite mark evidence must be photographed to document the impression. The specific method to properly photograph this type of evidence is described in [Chapter 2 - Forensic Photography](#).

The bite mark impression should also be swabbed using a swab moistened with sterile water to collect any potential traces of the assailant's saliva. Re-swab the impression with a second **dry** swab to collect any remaining traces (the "two swab method"). Allow the swabs to thoroughly **air dry**. Package the swabs together in a clean, properly labeled paper envelope and seal.

III. Additional Relevant Physical Evidence

Clothing

Articles of clothing worn by the victim and suspect (if possible) should be collected for submission to the Laboratory to be examined for seminal stains, blood stains, foreign hairs and fibers or other trace evidence adhering to the clothing. In addition, items at the crime scene may provide important evidence that associates the victim and/or the suspect to the scene.

Procedure for clothing:

1. Clothing of the victim must be kept separate from those of the suspect at all times.
2. Clothing worn at the time of or immediately after the offense must be recovered and preserved. This includes undergarments, towels, tissues, and sanitary napkins and/or tampons (only if used during or immediately after the offense).
3. Garments should be handled as little as possible to avoid the loss of trace evidence.
4. Package each item of clothing **separately** in a clean, properly labeled paper bag and seal.

Condoms

When condoms are recovered in suspected sexual assault cases, the amount of possible seminal fluid in them should be a consideration during collection, packaging and storage. Because DNA from the victim may be identified on the outside of the condom, great care should be taken to minimize leakage of semen from inside the condom. If little liquid appears to be in the condom itself, it can be placed in a glass specimen jar and frozen until submitted to the Laboratory. If a large amount of liquid is present, leakage is a concern and one of the following procedures should be used:

Alternative One

1. Attach the opening of the condom (with the fluid inside) to

the top or side of a specimen jar so the fluid cannot leak out.

2. Label the jar so it is maintained in an upright condition.
3. Freeze the jar until submitted to the Laboratory. (Do not mail, submit in person.)

Alternative Two

1. Using dry swabs (as many as necessary) collect all or as much of the fluid from inside the condom as possible.
2. Allow these swabs to dry together but separately from the condom itself. Package in a properly labeled **paper** bag or envelope and seal. Label as collected from the condom. Submit the condom in a separate package (see step 3).
3. Stand up another set of clean, dry swabs and drape the condom over them, tent-style, with the opening of the condom at the bottom. Allow to thoroughly air dry in a protected area. Package in a properly labeled **paper** bag or envelope and seal.

IV. Processing the Scene

1. Document the scene. See [Chapter 1 – Evidence Integrity](#), [Chapter 2 – Forensic Photography](#) and [Chapter 4 – Crime Scene Sketch](#).
2. Check for fingerprints. See [Chapter 13 – Latent Prints](#).
3. Recover articles such as towels, rags, tissues, etc., which may have been used as a wipe after ejaculation. See [Chapter 22 – Clothing and Fabrics](#).
4. Recover and submit any articles that may have become stained during the offense or might have foreign hairs present (e.g., bedding, rugs, sofa cushions, etc.). See [Chapter 23 - Hairs and Fibers](#).

Unusual Sexual Offenses

When unusual situations are encountered, please contact the DNA Analysis Unit at either laboratory:

(414) 382-7500 – Milwaukee | (608) 266-2031 – Madison

Notes