

## **COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS FOR ISOLATION OF *C. diphtheriae*\***

### **I. Throat swabs**

Instructions:

1. Pharynx should be clearly visible and well illuminated.
2. Depress tongue with an applicator and swab the throat without touching the tongue or inside the cheek.
3. Rub vigorously over any membrane, white spots, or inflamed areas; slight pressure with a rotating movement must be applied to the swab.
4. If any membrane is present, lift the edge and swab beneath it to reach the deeply located organisms.

### **II. Nasopharyngeal specimens**

Instructions:

1. Insert the swab into the nose through one nostril beyond the anterior nares.
2. Gently introduce the swab along the floor of the nasal cavity, under the middle turbinate until the pharyngeal wall is reached. Force must not be used to overcome any obstruction.

### **III. Skin diphtheria and other lesions**

Instructions:

1. Lesions should be cleansed with sterile normal saline and crusted material removed.
2. Press the swab firmly into the lesion.

\* Source: WHO Manual for the Laboratory Diagnosis of Diphtheria. Efstratiou A and Maple PAC. Reference number ICP-EPI 038(c). WHO, Geneva. 1994.