

Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing for *Bordetella pertussis* (whooping cough)

Collect a nasopharyngeal specimen as described on page DM-8 of the *Manual of Health Laboratory Tests* provided by the Division of Health and Environmental Laboratories. A commercial bacterial nasopharyngeal swab collection system should be used similar to the Bacti-Swab NPG Collection and Transport System, available from REMEL as item number 12-300 (listing a specific product by name does not constitute an endorsement by DHEL). Once the specimen is collected return the swab to the collection tube. DO NOT make smears. Complete the laboratory test request and order the PCR test by checking the “Bacterial Identification” box in the Diagnostic Microbiology section on the back side of the Universal Laboratory Form and writing “pertussis PCR” on the “Suspected” line. If you must use the old laboratory forms write the request on a “Miscellaneous Examination” form. Send the specimen to the laboratory at ambient temperature. Viable bacteria are not required for PCR analysis. Please direct any questions to (785) 296-1653.