



## Test Options for Bacterial Pharyngitis

Marshfield Labs continues to receive requests for full culture work-up and susceptibility testing when beta-hemolytic streptococcal pharyngitis alone is suspected. As a reminder to our providers, we have the following options available for the diagnosis of bacterial infections of the throat. Note that the routine aerobic culture with susceptibility testing *should not* be ordered when uncomplicated acute beta-hemolytic streptococcal pharyngitis is suspected. Please share this with your office and support staff as needed.

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Recommended Test</b>	<b>Base CPT Coding</b>
When Group A streptococcal pharyngitis is the main concern, and rapid results are desired	<u>Rapid Strep Antigen Test</u> Testcode: RAPST	Rapid test: 87880 Culture: 87081 (when rapid test is negative)
When Group A streptococcal pharyngitis is the main concern, and affordability is a factor	<u>Culture, Group A Strep Only</u> Testcode: GAS	87081*
When pharyngitis due to non-Group A β hemolytic streptococci or <i>A. haemolyticum</i> is a consideration	<u>Culture, Strep, Throat only</u> Testcode: STR	87070*
When a non-pharyngitis infection of the throat (e.g. tonsillar abscess) is suspected	<u>Culture, Aerobic, with Susceptibilities</u> <u>Testcode: AERS</u> (For Anaerobic bacterial culture, Testcode: ANAE, should also be considered)	87070, 87186*

\* Additional CPT coding may be added for bacterial typing or antimicrobial susceptibility. See our reference manual for details.

### Specimen Collection

1. Rapid Strep Antigen Test  
Collect two swabs and transport in a CultureSwab (red cap) at room temperature. CultureSwab Plus (blue cap) is NOT acceptable.
2. All other above testing  
Collect one swab and transport in a CultureSwab Plus (blue cap) at room temperature.

See our reference manual at [www.marshfieldlabs.org/reference/?page=testdirectory](http://www.marshfieldlabs.org/reference/?page=testdirectory) for more information. Or you may call our Customer Service Department at 800-222-5835.