How To Take A Nail Sample

To take samples of the abnormal nail, and any debris between the nail and nail bed:

Wipe off any treatment creams, lotions, or powders with 70% alcohol before sampling.

If infection of the nail is suspected:

Use (chiropody) scissors or nail clippers to sample the diseased part of nail.

When clipping the nail, include the full thickness of the nail and extend as far back from the nail tip as possible; viable fungi are most likely to be found in the most proximal part of diseased nail.

Include scrapings of debris from the area between the nail and nail bed (if possible)

Collect the samples into folded dark paper squares (if possible) , secure with a paper clip, and place in a plastic bag. Alternatively, use a commercially available fungal specimen packet. Label the sample clearly.

Keep the samples at room temperature; do *not* refrigerate them (nail fungi – [dermatophytes] die at low temperatures).