

# **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF THE CHEEK SWAB TEST KIT**

*NOTE:* It is IMPORTANT THAT FOOD PARTICLES ARE NOT INCLUDED with the cheek and gum cells sampled from the mouth. Sample cats when no food particles are present in the mouth. In the morning before eating is ideal. Otherwise, wait for at least 30 minutes after eating for the food particles to clear out of the mouth.

## **A. Label the Brushes**

Use the two brushes provided for each cat sampled. Label the paper backing of each brush package with the cat's name, and your first and last name (or name of the Veterinary Hospital), using a pen or permanent marker.

## **B. Taking the Samples**

1. Remove the brush from the package. Use the two brushes provided for each cat sampled.
2. Hold the brush handle between your thumb and forefinger. Roll the inner surface of the upper lip to the outside by inserting a finger in the corner of the mouth and pulling the lip upwards. Place the bristles of the brush on the inner surface of the lip. Release the lip, leaving the brush inside the mouth and steady the cat's muzzle by circling the nose with one hand, gently keeping the cat's mouth closed. Move the brush back and forth for a short distance in the space between the lip and gum, twirling the brush around with your thumb and forefinger as it is moved back and forth. Do not push the tip of the brush into the soft tissues of the mouth. The side bristles will be brushing on the surface of the gums and inner side of the lip.
3. Continue for 20-30 seconds (about 20 to 30 back and forth motions) using the same pressure you would use to brush your teeth. Repeat sampling on the other side of the mouth using the remaining brush. If multiple cats are being sampled wash your hands between cat samplings.
4. After collecting the sample, the brush should look different than the unused brush. The bristles may be darker in cats with pigmented gums or you may see a light film on the brush bristles. An unused brush is shown on the left, and a used brush on the right.



## **Tips**

A few swipes will not get enough cheek cells to run the test! Be sure to brush long enough.

## **Returning the Samples**

Let the brush air dry in a clean place for a few hours or overnight. Carefully replace the brush back into the package. Don't forget to label the paper backing of each brush package with the cat's name. Use a piece of tape to help keep the package closed, but do not seal tightly.