

**Claims**

1. A swab comprising:
  - a rod having a longitudinal axis; and
  - a tip comprising:
    - a proximal region at a distal end of the rod;
    - a distal region opposite the proximal region; and
    - a plurality of straight blades extending from the proximal region to the distal region.
2. The swab of claim 1, wherein the blades are spaced to define a plurality of reservoirs therebetween.
3. The swab of claim 2, wherein each reservoir is defined by a side surface of each of two blades, the blades being sufficiently nearby to generate surface tension to retain the sample in the reservoir.
4. The swab of claim 2 or 3, wherein the reservoirs are non-contiguous.
5. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the tip comprises a support extending from the proximal region to the distal region, and the plurality of blades extend outwardly of the support.
6. The swab of claim 5, wherein the support comprises a central shaft.
7. The swab of claim 6, wherein the blades extend radially outwardly from the central shaft.
8. The swab of claim 5, wherein the support comprises a flat leaf.
9. The swab of claim 6 or 8, wherein the blades project in a direction normal to a plane of support.

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10. The swab of claim 8 or 9, wherein the support forms two of said blades, each blade comprising one of two opposite, longitudinally extending edges of the flat leaf.
11. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein at least one said blade comprises a relief for increasing flexibility of the tip.
12. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the blades taper towards the distal region.
13. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein the proximal region comprises a fluted section extending from a first diameter at the rod to larger, second diameter at the blades.
14. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 13, wherein all edges of the tip are rounded.
15. The swab of claim 14, wherein the blades are rounded to form a hemispherical tip.
16. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 15, wherein the rod comprises a handling section and a tapered section extending distally of the handling section.
17. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 16, wherein the rod comprises a weakened section in the rod, spaced from the tip.
18. The swab of claim 16, wherein the rod comprises a weakened section in the handling section.
19. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 18, wherein the tip has a diameter of about 3.0 mm or 3.5mm.

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20. The swab of claim 9, wherein the tip comprises either:

on each side of the support, three blades extending normal to a plane of the support; or

on each side of the support, four blades extending normal to a plane of the support.

21. The swab of any one of claims 1 to 20, wherein the blades extend in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis.