# How to Collect a DNA Sample Without a Kit

If you need to collect a DNA sample and do not have a DNA Memorial kit readily available, you can proceed with the following steps.

**Step 1:** Purchase at least 6 sterile cotton swabs from a pharmacy. If there are no sterile cotton swabs available, a brand-new sealed box of cotton swabs will suffice.

**Step 2**: Purchase two brand new paper mailing envelopes in which to place samples for storage and mailing.

**Step 3**: Put on a sterile pair of disposable gloves, and open sterile/new cotton swabs.

**Step 4**: Applying pressure, rub and rotate the swab along the inside of the person’s cheek for at least 30 seconds, ensuring the entire swab tip has come into contact with the cheek. Repeat the swabbing with all six swabs. Be sure to swab in six different areas of the cheek, three from the left cheek and three from the right cheek. Placing a finger behind the swab when rubbing allows more pressure to be applied without breaking the swabs. Small discoloration on the swab is a good sign you have applied enough pressure.

**Step 5**: Place four swabs into one of the paper envelopes and the remaining 2 swabs in the other paper envelope. If the swabs are longer than the paper envelope, simply apply downwards pressure to the stem after the cotton swab portion is inside the envelope to snap the stem. Discard the wooden handle piece.

**Step 6:** Seal the envelope with tape or even a staple; do not lick. If there is excessive moisture or blood on swabs let the small envelope dry before placing into the larger envelope. Do not place in a plastic bag as this can contribute to bacterial and mold growth which degrades the DNA. The cellulose matrix of the envelope will wick away the moisture and it is normal to see a wet spot on the envelope as this happens. The envelope will keep out contaminates and keep in the contents while letting moisture out.

**Step 7:** Write the individual’s name and date of sample collection on the front of both paper envelopes containing samples.

**Step 8**: Place the sealed paper envelope containing four swabs into a larger paper envelope for mailing. Please address the envelope to:

DNA Memorial/ Lazarus DNA

101 Syndicate Avenue North Suite 2B

Thunder Bay, ON P7C 3V4

Canada

The second sealed paper envelope containing the remaining two swabs is kept on file as a backup sample. It can be kept in a filing cabinet with no special requirements. Do not dispose of it until you receive the purchased product. That back up sample is there in case something happened to the original swabs in transit as an insurance policy.

**Step 9**: Please place an online order and print out 2 copies and include one with the samples. Place the other copy with the backup samples as this order number will be used for inquiries. Ship the samples to DNA Memorial for processing.