



Biological Screening Workshop

Current Trends

Touch DNA

- **Touch DNA**
 - **Attempt to develop a DNA profile from skin cells that have transferred from a person to an object by touching or handling that object**
 - **Gun handle**
 - **Steering wheel**
 - **DNA from cigarette butts or saliva on cans is not considered “touch DNA” as there is typically saliva present on these items**

Touch DNA

- **Factors**

- **Person who touched item**
 - **Shedders vs. non-shedders**
- **Sweat provides vehicle for transfer**
- **Material of item being touched or handled**
 - **Plastic / metal**
 - **Fabric**
 - **Duct tape**
- **Length of time item was touched or handled**

Touch DNA

- **Analysis MAY be difficult**
 - Often low level samples or mixtures of DNA due to the nature of the sample
- **May need elimination standards before any information can be put into CODIS**
 - Swab of a steering wheel from a stolen car
 - The owner of the car would be expected to also have DNA on the steering wheel
 - Owner would need to be eliminated as a source of any results

How to Collect Touch Evidence

- **Best to send object into lab to be swabbed by the DNA analyst**
- **If not possible to send it item**
 - **Swab with ONE moistened sterile swab**
 - **Re-swab same area using ONE dry sterile swab**
 - **DO NOT swab with a gauze pad or multiple swabs**
 - **Gun**

Touch DNA

- **May need to decide between latent print analysis on the object vs. touch DNA analysis**
 - **Consider surface of item:**
 - **Is it amenable for latent prints?**
 - **For touch DNA?**
 - **How long was it handled by the suspect?**
 - **Has someone else routinely handled this item?**

Questions?