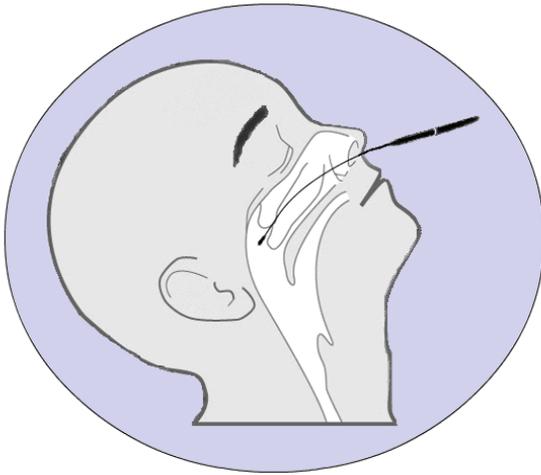


NASOPHARYNGEAL SWAB COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

A Guide for Health Care Professionals

Materials

- Flexible, synthetic-tipped (Dacron[®], polyester, rayon or nylon) nasopharyngeal swab with scored shaft.
- Specimen collection tube containing viral transport medium (ensure medium has not expired)
- Mask and gloves



Procedure

1. Tilt the patient's head back slightly.
2. Insert the swab into one nostril **straight back**, along the base of the nose, parallel with the roof of the mouth (typically 1/2 to 2/3 the distance between the corner of the nose to the ear).
Note: DO NOT force the swab if resistance is encountered before reaching the nasopharynx. Remove the swab and try the other nostril.
3. Rotate the swab gently for 5-10 seconds to collect epithelial cells.
4. Carefully withdraw the swab using a rotating motion.
5. Insert the swab into the transport medium, break the shaft at the pre-scored line, and close the tube.
6. Label the tube with the patient's information.

Storage and Transport of Specimen

- Refrigerate the specimen immediately at 4°C for up to 72 hours.
- If the specimen cannot be shipped within 48-72 hours, it should be frozen at or below -70°C.
- To avoid degradation, specimens should remain at 4°C during transport to the laboratory (i.e. shipped with an ice pack)