

Nasopharyngeal and Nasopharyngeal Wash/Aspirate

Sample Collection Instructions

Principle

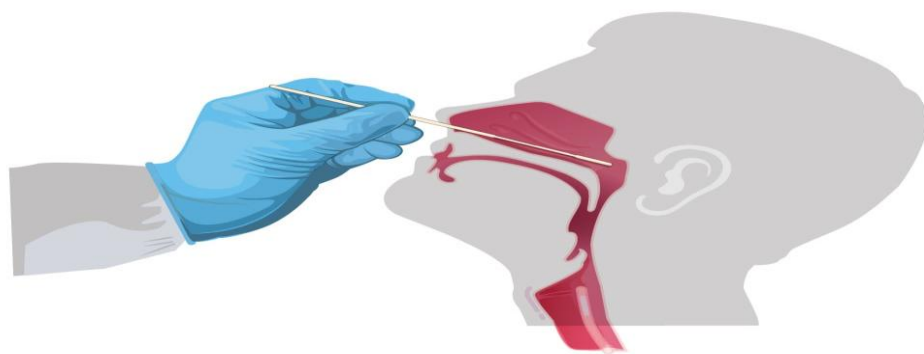
Proper specimen collection and handling is vital to providing accurate results. The sample type is specific to the test being requested. Refer to the test information as to what sample type is required.

Safety Precautions

Universal precautions and infection control practices should be followed while collecting any patient samples.

Instructions for collecting an NP specimen (performed by a trained healthcare provider):

- Tilt patient's head back 70 degrees.
- Gently and slowly insert a mini-tip swab with a flexible shaft (wire or plastic) through the nostril parallel to the palate (not upwards) until resistance is encountered or the distance is equivalent to that from the ear to the nostril of the patient, indicating contact with the nasopharynx.
- Gently rub and roll the swab.
- Leave swab in place for several seconds to absorb secretions.
- Slowly remove swab while rotating it. Specimens can be collected from both sides using the same swab, but it is not necessary to collect specimens from both sides if the mini-tip is saturated with fluid from the first collection.
- If a deviated septum or blockage create difficulty in obtaining the specimen from one nostril, use the same swab to obtain the specimen from the other nostril.
- Place swab, tip first, into the transport tube provided.
- Immediately label transport tube with two patient identifiers.



Nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal wash/aspirate (performed by a trained healthcare provider)

- Attach catheter to suction apparatus.
- Tilt patient's head back 70 degrees.
- Instill 1 mL-1.5 mL of non-bacteriostatic saline (pH 7.0) into one nostril.
- Insert the tubing into the nostril parallel to the palate (not upwards). Catheter should reach depth equal to distance from nostrils to outer opening of ear.
- Begin gentle suction/aspiration and remove catheter while rotating it gently.
- Place specimen in a sterile viral transport media tube.
- Immediately label transport tube with two patient identifiers.

References:

Interim Guidelines for Collecting and Handling of Clinical Specimens for COVID-19 Testing
October 29,2024