

Infection Prevention and Control Manual

Interim Policy for Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal Swab Collection (COVID-19)

Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal Swab Collection-COVID-19

Policy:

It is the policy of this facility to collect a Nasopharyngeal or Oropharyngeal Swab Specimen as recommended by Public Health, in consultation with physician and for residents demonstrating symptomatic disease.

Supplies:

- Gloves
- Gown
- Facemask or N95 Respirator
- Eye Protection (face shield, eye protection that cover sides)
- Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts
 - Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts

Procedure (If no specific Public Health directions are provided):

1. Perform Hand Hygiene
2. Gather Supplies
3. Don PPE (gown, N-95 if available or facemask, eye protection, gloves)
4. Close resident door
5. Limit only essential employees in room.
6. Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab:
 - a. Insert swab into nostril parallel to the palate. The swab should reach depth equal to the distance from nostrils to outer opening of the ear.
 - b. Leave the swab in place for several seconds to absorb secretions.
 - c. Slowly remove swab while rotating the swab
7. Oropharyngeal (OP) (throat) swab:
 - a. Swab the posterior pharynx using caution to avoid the tongue
8. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes that contain 2-3 ml of viral transport media
9. CDC is recommending collecting only the NP swab. If both swabs are used, the Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal swabs should be combined at collection into a single vial.
10. Oropharyngeal swabs remain an acceptable specimen type
11. A healthcare worker-collected nasal swab or nasal turbinate swab is an acceptable specimen if NP swab is not possible
12. An anterior nares specimen using a round room swab is an acceptable alternative if NP swab is not possible
13. Remove PPE in proper sequence
14. Perform Hand Hygiene
15. Specimen can be stored at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours after collection.
 - a. If shipping to CDC, follow Public Health directions according to the current edition of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Dangerous Goods Requirements.
 - i. If there is a delay in shipping, store specimens at 70°C or below.
 - ii. Follow Public Health directions for shipping instructions
16. Disinfect room and surfaces with EPA list N disinfectant.

This resource was developed utilizing Information from CDC and CMS.
Providers are reminded to review state and local specific information for any variance to national guidance

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Reference:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). March 25, 2020: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

Resource:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Interim Infection and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings. April 1, 2020: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>

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