

Nasopharyngeal Specimen Collection Using the Flocked Swab

For Respiratory Virus Testing

Nasopharyngeal swab specimens are the preferred specimen for the purpose of respiratory virus testing.

- Use the flocked swab for specimen collection and place it in the transport media tube.
- Specimens can be sent to the lab via the pneumatic tube system (in a biohazard transport bag).
- Wear personal protective equipment based on the patient's isolation and/or clinical status.
- Have the patient blow his/her nose or clear the nasal passages of mucus. The accuracy of the test results depends on collecting actual cells from the nasopharynx – not mucus.
- The swab must come in contact with the posterior nasopharynx mucosa and be rotated several times over 5-10 seconds to collect sufficient cells. The design of the flocked swab ensures that cells are dislodged and collected along the tip of the swab.

PROCEDURE

Obtain: Universal Viral Transport kit



1. Peel open the pouch containing the collection swab and remove it. Holding the swab near the patient's head, visualize the distance from the patient's nostril to the front of the ear.
2. Use the thumb and forefinger of a gloved hand to grip the swab shaft at a point equivalent to half the distance measured in step 1.
3. Tilt the patient's head backwards slightly. Have the patient close his/her eyes as this helps minimize discomfort. Gently insert the swab through one of the nostrils and horizontally into the nasal passage up to the measured distance on the swab shaft or until resistance is met. Rotate the swab 2-3 times and then hold the swab in place for 5-10 seconds to absorb sample material.
4. Remove the swab and insert into the Universal Transport Media tube. Break the plastic shaft swab at the break point line. Replace cap and screw on tightly. Apply label. Place in biohazard transport bag. Send specimen immediately to the lab via the pneumatic tube system.