

# Obtaining a Nasal (NA) swab

## Specimen Collection for COVID-19

### INTRODUCTION

#### **When to obtain a Nasal swab:**

- ❖ Offer use of nasal swab preferentially in patients regardless of the reason for specimen collection

### EQUIPMENT

1. A sterile flocked swab or alternate BILH approved testing swab
2. Tube containing viral transport media (UTM or VTM)
3. Personal protective equipment: yellow precaution gown, gloves, surgical mask with eye protection
4. Biohazard specimen bag
5. One patient label dated and signed
6. A printed copy of the order to obtain the specimen

### PROCEDURE

1. Advance the swab at a slight upward angle into the first nostril until you meet resistance. **The entire length of the bulb should be completely inside the nose.** This might make the patient feel like sneezing, reposition if necessary.
2. **Rotate** the swab for **15 seconds** (Fig. 2). Swab around the inside of the nose, like a whisk around a bowl of cookie batter. Remove the swab from first nostril, then insert the same swab at a slight upward angle into opposite nostril, again until you meet resistance. Make sure **the entire length of the bulb is completely inside the nose.**
3. **Rotate** the swab for a full **15 seconds** in the second nostril, then remove the swab and place into appropriate tube.

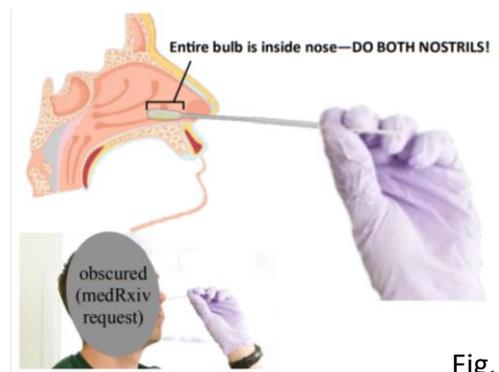


Fig. 2

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.06.12.20128736v1>

### PACKAGING

1. Once you have obtained the specimen, insert the swab into the tube containing the transport media, break the swab at the notched area if present, and secure the cap tightly onto the top of the tube.
2. Apply a signed and dated patient label onto the tube.
3. Place the specimen into the specimen bag and insert the printed order sheet into the pouch of the specimen bag.
4. Deliver to the Clinical Lab.

# Obtaining an Oropharyngeal (OP) swab

## Specimen Collection for COVID-19

### INTRODUCTION

#### **When to obtain a OP Swab:**

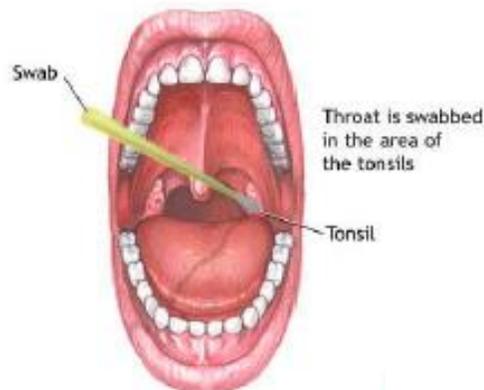
- ❖ If nasopharyngeal (NP) or nasal (NA) specimen cannot be collected due to patient tolerance or anatomic reason, a throat swab/oropharyngeal swab may be sent as an alternative specimen

### EQUIPMENT

1. A tongue blade.
2. A sterile throat swab or alternate BILH approved testing swab
3. Tube containing viral transport media (UTM or VTM)
4. Personal protective equipment: yellow precaution gown, gloves, surgical mask with eye protection
5. Biohazard specimen bag
6. One patient label dated and signed
7. A printed copy of the order to obtain the specimen

### PROCEDURE

1. Ask your patient to sit upright, if possible, and tilt their head back.
2. Ask them to open their mouth and stick their tongue out. This helps to expose the pharynx. If you can't see their pharynx, use a light and depress the patient's tongue with a tongue blade.
3. Ask the patient to say a nice *long* "ahh," which relaxes the throat muscles and helps minimize the gag reflex.
4. Carefully insert the swab into the oropharynx and collect the specimen by swabbing the patient's tonsillar area as shown below for approximately 5 seconds. Please avoid touching the tongue and cheeks.



### PACKAGING

1. Once you have obtained the specimen, insert the swab into the tube containing the transport media, break the swab at the notched area if present, and secure the cap tightly onto the top of the tube.
2. Apply a signed and dated patient label onto the tube.
3. Place the specimen into the specimen bag and insert the printed order sheet into the pouch of the specimen bag.
4. Deliver to the Clinical Lab.