

Collection Techniques for Nasopharyngeal and Oropharyngeal Swabs (COVID-19)

1. Label specimen container and collection form
2. Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic or metal shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCT testing. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media. NP and OP swabs should be placed and kept in separate vials.
3. *Nasopharyngeal swab*: Insert a swab into the nostril parallel to the palate until resistance is encountered. Leave the swab in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions.
4. *Oropharyngeal swab* (e.g., throat swab); Swab the posterior pharynx and tonsillar areas, avoiding the tongue, teeth and gums.

When collecting specimens on suspected COVID-19 patients, please wear the proper PPE to protect yourself. This would include:

- Gown
- Gloves
- N-95 mask
- Face Shield

When collecting specimen please have second person outside room, holding bag. The person holding the bag should have gloves on. The collector will drop sealed specimen into bag. This process will ensure the collection bag is not contaminated.