

Effective: 07/20/2020

Expiration:

Replaces Medical Directive #:

Subject: COVID-19 Pandemic - Nasal Specimen Collection Procedure

Purpose: To outline the procedure for obtaining nasal swab specimens for respiratory infection testing, to aid in the identification of SARS-CoV-2 (the COVID-19 virus). The quality of the specimen collection is critical, and the sensitivity of the test correlates directly with the correct collection of the specimen. This directive may be used by System-credentialed providers who are individually approved by OMD. This procedure may only be performed on patients at the specific request of TCPH or the Medical Director.

Materials: For respiratory viruses - universal transport media (UTM) with flexible or standard Minitip FLOCKED swab. Use this swab for any viral respiratory test (for example, influenza) that need nasal swab (vs. nasopharyngeal). Check the expiration date before use. Do NOT use bacterial flocked swabs.

Procedure:

- 1) Follow all infection prevention & control steps, including:
 - a) Hand hygiene before and after the procedure, and before and after the patient encounter
 - b) Adhere to the isolation status of the patient. Minimum PPE includes mask, eye protection, gloves, gown, and a respirator mask (e.g., N95).
- 2) If the patient has nasal congestion or a moderate-large amount of rhinorrhea, ask them to clear their nose into a tissue before collecting the sample.
- 3) Apply the label to the UTM tube
- 4) Do not stand directly in front of the patient.
- 5) Instruct the patient to tilt their head back slightly and ask them to close their eyes, if possible
- 6) Insert the Minitip flocked swab into the first nostril until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates.
- 7) Rotate the swab a few times against the nasal wall.
- 8) Remove swab and repeat the same process in the other nostril with the same swab.
- 9) After completing the second swab, immediately place into the sterile vial containing the universal transport media. Snap the shaft of the swab off at the score line. This line usually aligns with the length of the swab that can fit into the tube.
- 10) Close the cap tightly.
- 11) Place the tube into a biohazard bag with an absorbent cloth (comes with the swab package) and follow protocol for delivery.



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