

 NewCOVID 19 Specimen Collection Practice Change to Anterior Nares

What: Practice Change from Nasopharyngeal to Anterior Nares COVID 19 Specimen Collection

Why: Anterior Nares is less invasive and less technically complex reducing patient discomfort.

When: Wednesday, June 24th, 2020

Who: Nurses Performing COVID 19 Specimen Collection

Where: All COVID 19 Testing Sites (excludes Sayre Testing Sites)

COVID 19 Anterior Nares Specimen Collection Procedure

1. Perform Hand Hygiene & don PPE, according to current guidance from Infection Control.
2. Confirm Order in Epic - COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)
3. Verify patient identity using 2 patient identifiers.
4. Open specimen collection kit - a single swab should be used to sample both nares.
5. Grasp the swab (above the demarcated line) like a pencil to accommodate any resistance encountered during insertion.
6. Insert the swab at least 1 cm (0.5 inch) inside the nostril (naris) and firmly sample the nasal membrane by rotating the swab in a circular motion at least 2 times (CDC & Penn Medicine Lab Service Guide).
7. Leave in place for 10 to 15 seconds to absorb secretions (CDC).
8. Repeat the process for the other nostril using the same swab.
9. Place the swab immediately into the sterile viral transport media/sterile saline vial. The shaft of swab can be snapped off at the demarcated line, and the tube should be closed tightly.
10. Label specimen & verify identity using 2 patient identifiers.
11. Doff PPE & perform hand hygiene.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What specimen collection kit should be used for anterior nares?

A: You will most likely be using the same specimen collection kits used for Nasopharyngeal COVID 19 testing.

Q: Does this change specimen storage or PPE?

A: No, specimen storage and PPE are unchanged from previous practice – follow the same procedure used for other COVID 19 specimen collection.

Q: Can we ask patients presenting to the testing sites to swab themselves?

A: Nurses should continue to collect the specimens at this time.

Q: Can medical assistants perform anterior nares specimen collection?

A: The clinical operations team will communicate to practice leadership when medical assistants are trained to perform anterior nares specimen collection. At this time, nurses should continue to collect specimens.

Contacts:

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Training/Education: [Shannon Wells](#)

Resources:

[CDC Nasal \(Anterior Nasal\) Specimen Collection for SARS-CoV-2 Diagnostic Testing](#)

[Penn Medicine Lab Service Guide: COVID-19 \(SARS-CoV-2\)](#)

[Clinical Skills Elsevier Nasal & Throat Specimen Collection](#)

Consult entity specific policy related to specimen collection