

# Specimen Collection Guide

## COVID-19 Test

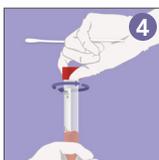
### COVID-19 Test Details

<b>Test Name</b>	SARS CoV-2 RNA PCR Test
<b>Specimen Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Nasal swab</li><li>▶ Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab</li><li>▶ Oropharyngeal (OP) swab</li></ul> <p>Exact manufacturer of the swab and transport media may vary with supply. Any swab of appropriate size and configuration with synthetic tip can be used, EXCEPT for calcium alginate tips, and swabs with wood shafts.</p>
<b>Specimen Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Specimens may be transported at room temperature if they are received within 3 days of collection</li></ul>
<b>Specimen Stability</b>	<p>Specimens collected in VTM, UTM, or saline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Room temperature: 3 days</li><li>▶ Refrigerated: 1 week</li><li>▶ Frozen: 1 month</li></ul>
<b>Turnaround Time</b>	24 – 48 hours from receipt by the laboratory
<b>Causes for Rejection</b>	Cotton-tip swabs; swabs with calcium alginate; swabs with wooden shafts

### Nasal Swab Specimen Collection



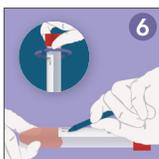
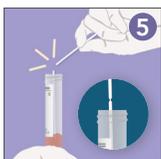
1. Partially peel open the swab package and remove the swab. Do not touch the soft tip or lay the swab down. If the soft tip touches any surface, throw it away and use a new swab. **Hold the swab by placing your thumb and forefinger in the middle of the swab shaft covering the score line.** Do not hold the swab shaft below the score line.



2. **Carefully insert the swab into the patient's first nostril until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates** (less than one inch into the patient's nostril). Rotate the swab a few times against the nasal wall for 10-15 seconds. Then remove the swab from the patient's nostril.

3. **Using the same swab, repeat the same process with the patient's other nostril.**

4. **While holding the swab in the same hand, unscrew the cap from the tube.** Do not spill the contents of the tube. Immediately place the swab into the transport media.



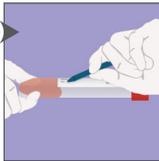
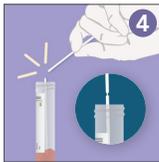
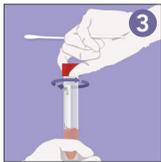
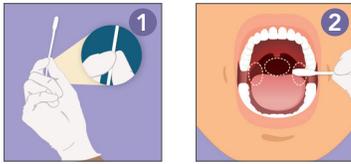
5. **Align the score line with the top edge of the tube and carefully break the shaft at the score line.** Throw away the broken-off shaft.

6. **Tightly screw the cap onto the tube.** Label the tube with two patient identifiers (name and date of birth).

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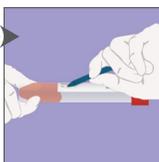
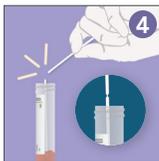
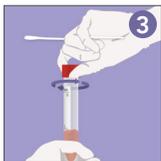
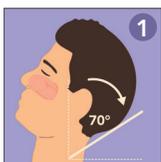
### Oropharyngeal (OP) Specimen Collection



1. Partially peel open the swab package and remove the swab. Do not touch the soft tip or lay the swab down. If the soft tip touches any surface, throw it away and use a new swab. **Hold the swab by placing your thumb and forefinger in the middle of the shaft covering the score line.** Do not hold the swab shaft below the score line.
2. **Carefully insert the swab into the patient's throat, ensuring contact with bilateral tonsils (if present) and the posterior pharyngeal wall.** Then, withdraw the swab without touching the inside of the cheeks or tongue.
3. **While holding the swab in hand, unscrew the tube cap.** Do not spill the tube contents. Immediately place the swab into the transport media.
4. **Align the score line with the top edge of the tube and carefully break the shaft at the score line.** Throw away the broken-off shaft.
5. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube. Label the tube with two patient identifiers (name and date of birth).

### Nasopharyngeal (NP) Specimen Collection

Swab specimens should be obtained from the posterior nasopharynx. Ideally two swabs should be collected, although one is acceptable. Ask the patient if they have a deviated septum and then have them clear their nasal passages by blowing their nose.



1. Tilt the patient's head back to a 70° angle. Check for nasal obstructions.
2. **Gently insert the swab straight back into a nostril aiming posteriorly along the floor of the nasal cavity until reaching the posterior wall of the nasopharynx.** Keep the swab near the septum floor of the nose while gently pushing the swab into the post nasopharynx (the swab should reach depth equal to distance from nostrils to the outer opening of the ear). Be careful not to insert the swab upwards. Do not force the swab. If there is an obstruction, try the other nostril. **Leave the swab in place for up to 10 seconds to absorb secretions. Slowly remove the swab while rotating it.**
3. **While holding the swab in hand, unscrew the tube cap.** Do not spill the tube contents. Immediately place the swab into the transport media.
4. **Align the score line with the top edge of the tube and carefully break the shaft at the score line.** Throw away the broken-off shaft.
5. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube. Label the tube with two patient identifiers (name and date of birth).