

Instructions for Collecting Nasopharyngeal Swab Specimens

Kits for collecting nasopharyngeal swab specimens include the following items:

- Instructions for specimen collection
- Dacron nasopharyngeal swab
- Transport medium (Regan–Lowe or Hank’s solution)
- Biohazard Bag
- Falcon Tube
- State Laboratory Specimen Submitting Form
- Mailing Label

Specimen Collection Instructions

1. A mask should be worn throughout the procedure.
2. The specimen should be collected with a pernasal nasopharyngeal (SP) swab. Only Dacron swabs should be used. (cotton, rayon, or calcium alginate swabs should not be used). Collect specimens by passing the NP swab on a flexible wire handle through the nares until resistance is met by virtue of contact with the nasopharynx. Although a contact time of 30 seconds is advocated, in practice a few seconds of contact often induces coughing or patient resistance, either of which is adequate incentive to remove the swab.
3. Inoculate the transport medium (Hank’s solution for viral specimens, Regan Lowe media for *B. pertussis*) by inserting the swab at least ½ inch below the surface of the medium. Bend the wire to fit the transport medium tube and reattach the cap securely.
4. Label the transport tube with the name and specimen source.
5. Complete the specimen submission form included in the kit. Failure to submit or complete this form could result in a delay in processing the specimen.
6. Place the labeled transport medium tube into the falcon tube. The falcon tube should then be placed in the biohazard bag. The specimen submitting forms should be enclosed in the side pocket of the biohazard bag. Transport specimen to the laboratory on ice by courier or mail. The proper mailing form with the correct address is included in the kit.

