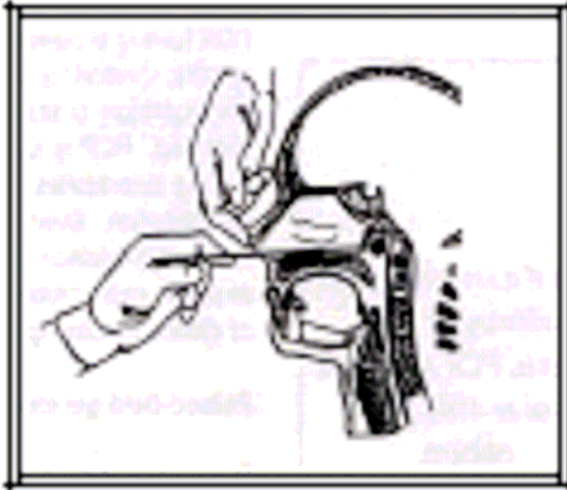


NASOPHARYNGEAL SWAB COLLECTION FOR PCR TESTING

Materials for nasopharyngeal swab collection:

- Two polyester nasopharyngeal swabs*
- Lab specimen container with viral transport media
- Gloves and face mask, N-95 preferred

***Cotton-tipped or calcium alginate swabs are not acceptable. PCR assays may be inhibited by residues present in these materials**



Procedure:

1. Set up supplies and don gloves and mask.
2. Have the patient sit with head against a wall as patients have a tendency to pull away during these procedures. Push the tip of the nose up for a straighter passageway. A gentle curve in the swab shaft may be useful.
3. Insert first swab through one nostril **straight back** (not upwards), along the floor of the nasal passage until reaching the posterior wall of the nasopharynx. The distance from the nose to the ear gives an estimate of the distance the swab should be inserted. Do not force the swab. If an obstruction is encountered, try the other side.
4. Rotate swab gently and leave in place for 10-15 seconds. (Some references say 10-30 seconds.) This procedure is likely to induce tears and coughing.
5. Remove swab and insert into media. Break shaft to fit into tube. If the shaft is wire it may be twisted to break. An alternate way to break the shaft is by bending the wire over the edge of the tube, partially putting on the lid, and pulling wire back and forth until it breaks. Avoid using scissors unless they are thoroughly cleaned with bleach prior to use to avoid potential DNA contamination of a PCR specimen.
6. Repeat above process using the second swab in the other nostril.
7. Label the specimen and complete a requisition form.