

Instructions for Collection of Specimens for Identification of Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses

Specimen Collection Criteria:

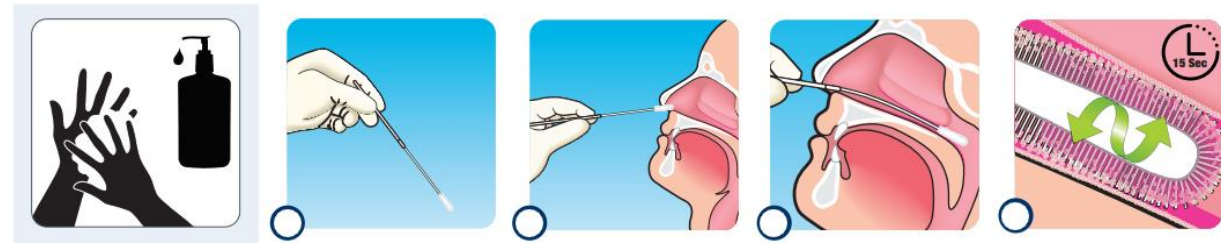
- Specimen collection must be within 72 hours of onset
- Patient must have fever (temperature $\geq 100^{\circ}$ F [37.8° C]) AND
- Patient must have cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a known other cause)

Instructions:

- Always store viral media transport medium (VTM) at room temperature. Ensure the VTM is a clear pink solution before use (discard if it is cloudy or turns yellow).
- Use only the sterile swab provided (**DO NOT** use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts)
- Collect one nasopharyngeal (NP) swab

Collecting the Sample:

1. Wash hands with soap and water and put on personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Remove the swab from packaging, holding by the end of the applicator and identify the breaking point.
3. Position patient's head slightly back.
4. Gently insert the swab into the nostril back to the posterior nares. Keep the swab near the septum floor of the nose while gently pushing the swab into the post nasopharynx. As a visual reference, the swab should be inserted about half the distance from the opening of the patient's nostril and the ear.
5. Repeat Step 4 in the opposite nostril using the same swab.
6. When the swab is in place, rotate in a circular motion gently against the nasopharynx mucosa for 10-15 seconds then gently remove swab.



Packing the Sample:

1. While holding the swab, remove the cap from the viral media transport tube.
2. Insert the swab into the viral media transport tube until the breakpoint is level with the tube opening.
3. Bend the swab shaft at a 180 degrees angle to break it off at the breaking point.
4. Discard the broken part of the applicator into an approved waste disposal container.
5. Screw the cap back onto the viral media transport tube and apply patient identification label or write **patient's name, date of specimen collection, and specimen type (source of specimen)** on the tube label.
6. Refrigerate tube immediately.
7. Seal the specimen tube in a zip-lock **biohazard bag**.
8. Complete the enclosed "Specimen Submission Form" and place the form in the outside pocket of the biohazard bag OR staple or tape the form to the outside of the biohazard bag.
9. Complete the Chain of Custody Form/have patient initial off and submit specimen to lab.
10. Remove PPE and wash hands with soap and water.



If you have any questions regarding the submission of specimens, please contact the Hawaii Department of Health, Disease Investigation Branch at 808-586-4586.