







## How to collect swabs for SARs-CoV2/COVID-19 PCR testing – updated 15/07/2021

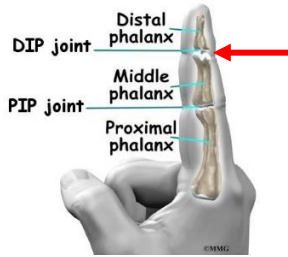
There are also 2 different techniques in collecting nose and throat swabs depending on the swab stick and viral culture medium:

- The **current recommended guideline** uses Throat and Deep Nasal technique – Appendix 1.
  - The second technique is using a Throat and Nasopharyngeal technique (no longer recommended for COVID-19 testing purposes, unless otherwise clinically indicated to test for other conditions at the same time) – Appendix 2.
1. **Regardless of which swab system is used the same swab stick is used to collect throat and nasopharyngeal specimen or throat and deep nasal specimen**
  2. **Aseptic technique is required to ensure no cross contamination of the specimen**
  3. **Collecting COVID-19 swabs are not an Aerosol Generating Procedure**
  4. **PPE: surgical mask, eye protection, long sleeved gown, bare below the elbows and gloves**

### Appendix 1. Throat and Deep Nasal swab sticks

Red Top Dry Viral	Green top Viral (Viral Transport Medium)	Green Cap (Liquid Viral Transport Medium)
 <p><b>Not to be used for Nasopharyngeal</b></p>	 <p><b>Not to be used for Nasopharyngeal</b></p>	 <p><b>Not to be used for Nasopharyngeal</b></p>
Edwards Yellow Top VTF	Edwards Lilac Cap	Orange Top
		

## How to take a Throat and DEEP NASAL swab specimen



1. Explain the procedure to patient, obtain verbal consent.
2. Measure the patient's index finger to the first finger joint (distal interphalangeal joint - DIP) ensuring the swab tip is not contaminated
3. Any of these 3 swabs can be used for COVID-19 samples for throat and **deep nasal** specimens.

**The same swab is used to collect throat and nose specimens for each patient – ensure aseptic technique**

Throat Swab	Deep Nasal Swab – use same swab as for throat
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place tongue depressor firmly on the back of the tongue.</li> <li>2. Holding the swab stick by the plastic cap, swab both tonsils and the posterior pharynx.</li> <li>3. Avoid touching the tongue or mouth to avoid contamination.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gently insert the swab into the nostril to the measured length</li> <li>2. Gently rotate the swab several times against the nasal wall</li> <li>3. Withdraw swab stick and repeat in other nostril with same swab</li> <li>4. Put the swab stick directly into the transport tube (green virus collection system swab stick will need to have the snap joint broken carefully by the top part, ensuring no cross contamination of the tip as per below) and secure lid/top</li> <li>5. Label and place in single red bag to be walked to Lab (not sent in the pneumatic chute)</li> </ol>
	<p>Measure from tip of the patient's index finger to the first knuckle joint (DIP joint) to insert that length</p>

### Virus collection and preservation system only

**SNAP HERE at the join by the top part of the stick - don't cross contaminate the tip**



## Appendix 2. Throat and Nasopharyngeal swab sticks

Edwards Yellow Top VTF	Edwards Lilac Cap	Orange Top
		

### How to take a throat and Nasopharyngeal specimen

**The same swab stick is used to collect throat and nasopharyngeal specimens for each patient.**

Explain the procedure to patient, obtain verbal consent. Please note this technique is no longer recommended for COVID-19 testing purposes only, but may be used if clinically indicated to test for other conditions at the same time.

Throat Swab	Nasopharyngeal Swab – use same swab as for throat
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place tongue depressor firmly on the back of the tongue.</li> <li>2. Holding the swab stick by the plastic cap, swab both tonsils and the posterior pharynx.</li> <li>3. Avoid touching the tongue or mouth to avoid contamination.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Measure the distance the swab is to be inserted into the nostril by holding it along the length of the patient’s index finger (avoiding any cross contamination)</li> <li>2. Holding the swab at the correct measurement, insert into nostril and slide along the floor of the nasal cavity to the length of the patient’s index finger</li> <li>3. Gently rotate the swab and leave in place for several seconds to absorb secretions</li> <li>4. Remove the swab</li> <li>5. Put the swab stick directly into the transport tube and secure lid (orange) or carefully snap at the break point from the top end without cross contaminating the specimen tip.</li> <li>6. Label and place in single red bag to be walked to Lab (not sent in the pneumatic chute)</li> </ol>
