

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
NH PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES



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**COVID-19 SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT KIT INSTRUCTIONS**

**Important Information:**

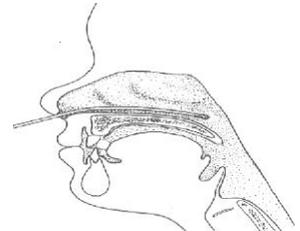
For initial diagnostic testing for COVID-19, CDC recommends collecting and testing upper respiratory (nasopharyngeal, oropharyngeal or anterior nasal swabs), and lower respiratory (sputum, if possible) for those patients with productive coughs. Induction of sputum is not recommended. Specimens should be collected as soon as possible regardless of the time of symptom onset. Maintain proper infection control when collecting specimens. Specimens should be refrigerated (2-8°C) as soon as possible after collecting. Keep specimen cold during transportation.

**Kit components:**

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|---|--|
| 1 Tube of transport media                     | Specimen collection and transport instructions |
| 1 Nasopharyngeal, Oropharyngeal or Nasal swab | Specimen transport bag                         |
| 1 Resealable specimen bag                     |  |

**Procedure for collection:**

1. Verify that the transport media has not expired. Results obtained from specimens received in expired media may not accurately reflect patient condition.
2. Identify the patient. Label the transport media with patient name, specimen source, and the date of collection.
3. Fill out the requisition form completely and legibly. Form can be found at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/lab/labrequisitions.htm>
4. **For collection of Nasopharyngeal (NP) specimen:** With the patient's neck in an extended position, gently insert a sterile nasopharyngeal swab into the nostril. Pass the swab along the floor of the nose until it contacts the posterior nasopharyngeal wall and gently rotate for 5 seconds to absorb secretions. Remove the swab and place it in the transport media.
5. **For collection of Oropharyngeal (OP) specimen:** Insert swab into the posterior pharynx and tonsillar areas. Rub swab over both tonsillar pillars and posterior oropharynx and avoid touching the tongue, teeth, and gums.
6. **For collection of Anterior Nasal (Nasal) specimen:** Using a flocked or spun polyester swab, insert the swab at least 1 cm (0.5 inch) inside the nostril (naris) and firmly sample the nasal membrane by rotating the swab and leaving in place for 10 to 15 seconds. Sample both nostrils with same swab.
7. **For collection of Sputum:** Have the patient rinse the mouth with water and then expectorate deep cough sputum directly into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container (not provided in kit). Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C until transport. To help prevent leaking, assure the cap is threaded properly.
8. **Specimen handling:** Place swab immediately into sterile tube containing 2-3 ml of transport media. Aseptically, cut or break applicator stick off near the tip to permit tightening of the cap. Label all specimens with the patient's name, ID number, specimen type, and date collected. To help prevent leaking, assure caps are threaded properly, then place the tube into the resealable bag provided. Place specimen in specimen transport bag. Place completed requisition into sleeve of specimen transport bag. Store specimens at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours after collection. If a delay in testing or shipping is expected, store specimens at -70°C or below.



**NOTE:** Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing.

To order more kits, please email us at [phlclinicalkitorders@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:phlclinicalkitorders@dhhs.nh.gov)  
or call us at 603-271-4605 or 1-800-852-3345 ext.4605  
For technical questions, please call the Virology Unit at 603-271-4661