



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Nasopharyngeal swab collection

In order to limit the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, nasopharyngeal swabs are NOT currently performed at Melbourne Pathology collection centres. Please see website for updates ([www.mps.com.au](http://www.mps.com.au)).

**THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE A GUIDE FOR  
NON-MELBOURNE PATHOLOGY STAFF**

### Instructions

Suitable for influenza, RSV, parainfluenza, pertussis and any other respiratory virus, ie. rhinovirus, coronavirus, bocavirus etc.

### **DO NOT USE THIS PROCEDURE FOR MRSA OR OTHER BACTERIAL COLLECTIONS.**

Take a collection from the throat first. Then using the same swab, collect a nasopharyngeal sample using the following procedure:

Immobilise the patient's head at (approximately) a 20 degree angle by holding the chin of an adult, (carer/parent holds the head for a child). Wear gloves and a mask and have the special thin, flocked swab and the transport tube at the ready. **(Note: Do not discard liquid from the swab tube. Do not put the swab into liquid media prior to collection).**



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**Note: The distance the swab is inserted is equal to the length of the patient's index finger. Mark this distance on the swab prior to insertion.**

1. Label the swab with the patient's full name, date of birth and date and time of collection.
2. Gently insert the thin plastic flocked swab into a nostril until the posterior nares is reached.
3. Insert the swab directly back, not upwards (as per diagram).
4. Leave the swab in place for up to 10 seconds. (This procedure may induce coughing and tearing).
5. If resistance is encountered during insertion of the swab, remove it and attempt insertion on the opposite nostril.
6. Remove the swab slowly.

7. Break at the score mark and place the swab into the transport tube provided (**Note: Do not discard liquid from the swab tube**).

