

# COVID-19: INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION

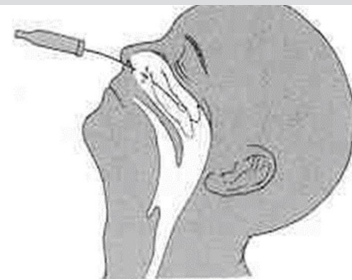
## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

COVID-19 infection prevention and control advice is available on the Ministry of Health website

Droplet and contact precautions are advised when collecting specimens, which includes the use of:

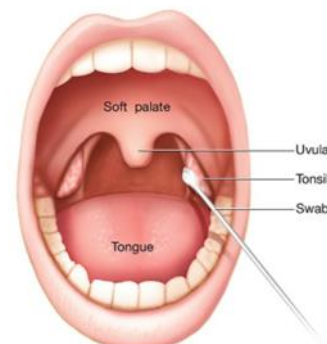
- Disposable, fluid resistant gown/apron
- Gloves
- Surgical mask
- Eye protection (e.g. goggles or face shield)

## NASOPHARYNGEAL SWAB (NPS - **PREFERRED**)



1. Ensure patient blows nose prior to collection.
2. Label VTM tube with patient's name, date of birth AND/OR NHI number, and collection time and date.
3. **NOTE: VTM liquid may appear clear and colourless – this is still OK to use.**
4. Using a synthetic fibre-tipped nasopharyngeal swab, insert swab into one nostril. For adequate collection the swab tip must extend well beyond the anterior nares until some resistance is met (see diagram).
5. Press on swab tip and rotate the swab tip several times across the mucosal surface to collect cellular material.
6. Place swab into VTM, break off stem and recap. Ensure there is no leakage.
7. **NOTE: DOUBLE BAGGING IS NO LONGER REQUIRED.** Place specimen into SINGLE bag and with the request form in the outer sleeve of the bag.
8. Transport to laboratory via your usual collection service.

## OROPHARYNGEAL + PERNASAL SWAB (OPS - ONLY USE IF NASOPHARYNGEAL UNAVAILABLE)



1. The Noble Bio swabs (as shown above) are a pack of 2 swabs plus VTM. Use only the thick shaft swab for swabbing the oropharynx and discard the NPS.
2. Swab the oropharynx first: swab both tonsillar beds and the back of the throat, avoiding the tongue. Do this slowly, rotating the swab with gentle pressure so that epithelial cells are collected.
3. Using the same swab, perform a deep per nasal swab: pass the swab into a nostril horizontally backwards for 2-3cm. Gently rotate swab for 10 seconds applying sideways pressure so that epithelial cells from the midline nasal septum are collected. Adequate contact time is crucial for sample quality.
4. Place swab into VTM and break off stem and recap. **Ensure cap is screwed tightly to avoid leakage.**
5. Single bag and transport the sample in the same way as for NPS.