

Common Respiratory Viruses, novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019) plus Mycoplasma and Bordetella

To maximise test sensitivity SA Pathology recommends collection of a *combined* throat and deep nasal swab using a Viral Transport Swab (Green top).

Sputum may be more sensitive for some organisms (e.g. Bordetella, Mycoplasma) and is recommended when COVID-19 is highly suspected. Sputum or other deep respiratory specimen should be collected in patients who are negative on the swab specimen but have significant risk factors or continuing symptoms.

Personal protection

- Place a surgical mask on the patient and move patient to an isolated room if COVID -19, measles or highly pathogenic influenza is suspected.
- While reviewing the patient or collecting specimens from a low risk patient, use a disposable fluid resistant gown, gloves, surgical mask and eye protection.
- While *collecting* specimens, from high risk patients (e.g. when COVID-19 (with obvious symptoms) or highly pathogenic influenza (HPI) or measles is suspected) use airborne precautions, i.e eye protection and N95 mask.

Throat (posterior pharyngeal) & anterior nasal swab collection

1. Stand to one side and tilt the patient's head back slightly.
2. Ask the patient to open the mouth and say "argh"
3. Gently depress the tongue with a tongue depressor.
Note – this procedure can induce the gag reflex.
4. With a sweeping motion, swab the posterior pharyngeal wall and tonsillar pillars. Avoid the soft palate and avoid touching the tongue with the swab tip.
5. Using the same swab, insert the swab tip into the nostril as far as the anterior end of the nasal turbinate, parallel to the palate. (Approximately 2-3cm in adults).
6. Leave the swab in place for a few seconds then slowly withdraw using a rotating motion.
7. Put the swab directly into the transport tube.
8. Label the tube with patient full name, collection date, time and source. Sign the tube.



To order Viral Transport Swabs please go to www.sapathology.sa.gov.au and click on Supplies/Ordering.

