



Oropharyngeal (OP) specimen collection for COVID-19 testing

- 1 Assemble the supplies needed. For sample collection, have viral transport medium with included swabs, specimen label and biohazard bag available.



Depicted is an example of the supplies used to collect an oropharyngeal specimen.*

- 2  Open the viral transport medium package and remove one swab, taking care not to touch the tip to any surface or lay it down.

- 3 
 - Hold the swab with fingers placed on the score line.
 - Gently insert swab into back of the throat and tonsillar area. Rub the swab over both tonsillar pillars and the posterior oropharynx; avoid touching the tongue, teeth, and gums.

- 4  Place swab into the viral transport medium and break (snap) off swab at the indicator line. Replace cap and screw on securely.

- 5
 - Label sample and place in biohazard bag.
 - Freeze specimen and keep frozen.
 - Submit sample on one requisition, with test code 139900 — COVID-19. Please include the patient's address, phone number and appropriate diagnosis code. To avoid delays in turnaround time when requesting multiple tests on frozen samples, please submit separate frozen specimens for each test requested.

Storage Transport Condition - Samples/specimens should be shipped frozen due to limited stability at -20° C (preferred); refrigerated specimens acceptable (if received for testing within 72 hours of collection). Refrigerated swabs submitted within 72 hours will be accepted.

*Exact manufacturer of the swab and transport media may vary with supply. Any swab of appropriate size and configuration with a synthetic tip can be used, **EXCEPT** for calcium alginate tips, swabs with preservatives, and swabs with wood shafts. Viral transport media acceptable for collection of influenza specimens in 1 mL or 3 mL volumes can be used to transport swabs for COVID-19 testing.



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