

COVID-19 RNA Test Specimen Collection – **UPDATE 02/25/2022**

For COVID-19 symptomatic patients, clinician-collected bilateral anterior nares (AN), nasopharyngeal (NP), or mid nasal turbinate (MNT), all ideally combined with oropharyngeal (OP) swab, is an acceptable specimen collection method.

- As clarification: if multiple tests are ordered in addition to the symptomatic COVID test, such as an RSV panel, an OP/NP or OP/MNT would be needed.

For asymptomatic COVID-19 testing, even initial testing, the recommended form of testing is bilateral Anterior Nares (AN) with or without Oropharyngeal (OP). Refer to [this FAQ](#) for further detail.

**What Test Kit to Use?**

We may continue to see different test kits based on availability of supplies.

ANY of the test kits picture on page 3 of this practice update are acceptable and have been validated by UCSF micro lab for:

- Anterior Nares with OP
- NP/MNT & OP swab specimens

To identify COVID-19 infections that were incubating on admission and to prevent transmission in the hospital, the Health System has instituted routine inpatient re-testing for asymptomatic patients on day 3 after admission and for patients undergoing Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP) Q 7 days. For adult patients in shared rooms, they will also be tested every Monday and Thursday. For repeated testing, anterior nares testing has excellent sensitivity.

- See the table below for guidance for anterior nares testing frequency
- For details on the adult patients refer to this [FAQ](#) and for pediatric patients this [FAQ](#)

Population	Admission	Hospital Day #3	Hospital Day #7	Subsequent
Asymptomatic, no AGPs	✓  Exceptions—see “COVID recovered” as per below	✓  Exceptions-- day of discharge, baby <=28 weeks corrected gestational age, has current COVID-19 infection, “COVID recovered” as per below		Retest if needing anesthesia/procedural sedation and last test > 7 days prior
Asymptomatic, frequent/continuous AGPs <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✓	Weekly. Retest if needing anesthesia/procedural sedation and last test > 7 days prior
<b>Adult Units only:</b> Asymptomatic, shared room, +/- AGPs	✓	✓	Every Monday and Thursday starting ≥ 2 days after day 4 test	
COVID-19 recovered and ≤90 days since first positive COVID-19 test collected (“COVID recovered”)	No asymptomatic testing recommended			

- For a list of AGPs refer to this [guidance](#). This would also include patients with tracheostomies and laryngostomas given their need for suctioning and possibility of other AGPs.

### OP and NP/MNT Collection Technique

Specimen Collection Instruction Videos Posted on [HEIP COVID-19 Page](#)

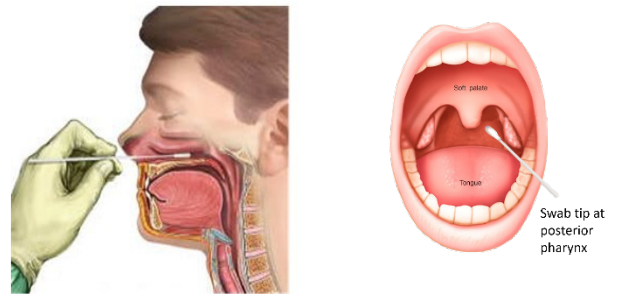
Apex Order: The order instruction will indicate that the specimen is collected as OP and NP/MNT specimen collection and document the method of collection.

**OP Collection:** Swab the posterior pharynx near tonsils, avoiding the tongue, sides of mouth, and teeth.

**NP/Mid-Turbinate Collection:** Tilt head 70°. Insert swab into nostril parallel to the palate, gently rotating the swab inward until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates. Rotate the swab a few times against the nasopharyngeal wall (approx. 10 sec).

**Thick Swab** = Mid-Turbinate collection

**Thin Swab** = NP Collection



### Bilateral Anterior Nares Collection and OP Collection Technique

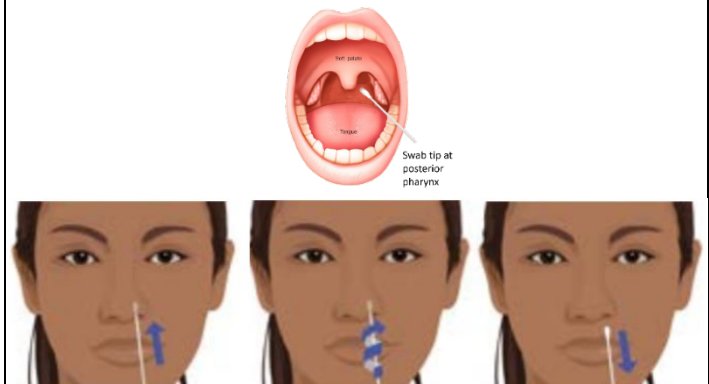
Specimen Collection Instruction Flyer posted on [Clinical Laboratory Page](#)

Apex Order: If the patient is asymptomatic, the order instruction will indicate that the specimen is collected from the bilateral anterior nares with or without Oropharyngeal (OP).






- The order for the test on hospital day #4 will be automated as part of the admission order set.

**OP Collection:** Swab the posterior pharynx near tonsils, avoiding the tongue, sides of mouth, and teeth.

**Bilateral Anterior Nares Collection:** Insert the swab approximately ¾ inches into the nostril (naris). Rotate the swab against the inner front wall of the nasal cavity for approximately 10 seconds. Using the same swab, repeat in the other nostril.





Test Kit	Collection Instructions
<p><b>Single Flocked Swab with 3mL Transport Media</b></p> 	<p><b>OP and NP/Mid-Turbinate Collection</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP sample.</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect NP/Mid-Turbinate sample.</li> </ol> <p><b>Bilateral Anterior Nares Sample with OP</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP sample</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b> Collect AN sample from one nostril.</li> <li>3. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect sample from other nostril.</li> </ol> <p>For either specimen, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Place in vial, breaking off excess shaft. Close vial.</li> <li>5. Label vial (label from Lab Collect), send to lab.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Single Flocked Swab with 3mL CLEAR Media</b></p>  <p><b>OR</b></p>  <p><b>OR</b></p>  <p><b>Synthetic Swab</b></p>	<p><b>OP and NP/Mid-Turbinate Collection</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP sample.</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect NP/Mid-Turbinate sample.</li> </ol> <p><b>Bilateral Anterior Nares Sample with OP</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP sample</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b> Collect AN sample from one nostril.</li> <li>3. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect sample from other nostril.</li> </ol> <p>For either specimen, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Place in vial, breaking off excess shaft. Swab needs to be pushed into vial until it bends to break at score. Close vial.</li> <li>4. Label vial (label from Lab Collect), send to lab.</li> </ol>
<p><b>BD Universal Viral Transport (220221) with Synthetic standard swab(s)(220239)</b></p> 	<p><b>OP and NP/Mid-Turbinate Collection</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP sample.</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect NP/Mid-Turbinate sample.</li> </ol> <p><b>Bilateral Anterior Nares Sample with OP</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect OP Sample</li> <li>2. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b> Collect AN sample from one nostril.</li> <li>3. Using <b>SAME SWAB</b>, collect sample from other nostril.</li> </ol> <p>For either specimen, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Place in vial, breaking off excess shaft. Close vial.</li> <li>4. Label vial (label from Lab Collect), send to lab. *IF kit has 2 swabs—use 1 swab for OP sample and 1 swab for NP/ Mid-turbinate sample. Place BOTH swabs in same vial.</li> </ol>

