

## 2019 – NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) SPECIMEN COLLECTION KIT INSTRUCTIONS

**Use:** To collect nasopharyngeal specimens for 2019-Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Kit contents:** 1 Tube of Universal Transport Media (UTM)  
1 Nasopharyngeal swab (smaller swab, flexible shaft) **(CDC recommended)**  
1 Ziploc specimen bag containing absorbent pad  
1 STARLAB Test Requisition form  
1 Ice pack (keep in a freezer until ready to package & transport specimens)



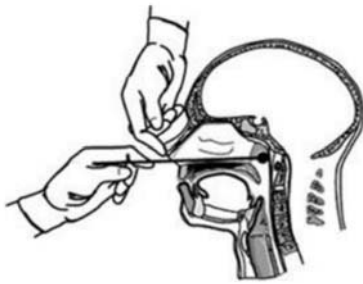
### Collection Instructions:

See the current CDC guidelines for upper and lower respiratory specimen collection and appropriate biosafety precautions for healthcare workers found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/caring-for-patients.html>

- Label tube of UTM legibly with the patient's name **and** date of birth, or medical record number (specimen tube **must** have two unique patient identifiers on it, or it will not be tested).
- Use the flexible shaft NP swab provided to collect the specimen.

- Have the patient blow their nose and then check for obstructions.

- Tilt the patient's head back 70 degrees & insert the swab into nostril parallel to the palate (not upwards) until resistance is encountered or the distance is equivalent to that from nostrils to outer opening of patient's ear indicating contact with nasopharynx. Leave swab in place for several seconds to absorb secretions. Slowly remove the swab while rotating it.



### Nasopharyngeal specimen: **(CDC recommended specimen type)**

- Insert the swab into the tube of UTM, making certain that the swab tip is covered by the liquid in the tube. The swab is to remain in the tube for transport
- Plastic shaft NP swab:** The swab shaft extends past the top of the tube. Snap off at the break line on the shaft, allowing the end with the swab tip to remain in the liquid. The tip of the swab must be immersed in the liquid.

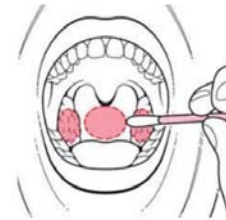
- Wire shaft swab:** cut the upper end of the wire with clean scissors so that it is even or below the top of the vial, allowing the end with the swab tip to remain in the liquid.

**Throat specimen (Oropharyngeal swab [OP]):** • Use a throat swab to collect specimen by swabbing the patient's posterior pharynx and tonsillar area (avoid the tongue).

- Insert the swab into the vial of UTM. If the swab shaft extends past the top of the tube, clip it so that the top of the swab shaft is just below the top of the tube allowing the end with the swab tip to remain in the liquid. The swab tip must be immersed in the liquid.

**If nasopharyngeal specimen cannot be collected due to inability to procure np swabs, a throat swab can be sent as an alternative specimen.**

**NOTE:** Throat swab tips must be synthetic (ex: polyester, rayon, or dacron). Cotton or calcium alginate tipped, or wooden shaft swabs are unacceptable



### Next Steps:

- Securely tighten the cap on the tube of UTM and recheck to make certain it is labeled with two patient identifiers. Write "NP" or "OP" on the tube of UTM. Insert tube into specimen transport bag and close bag tightly.

- Complete a RI State Health Laboratories test requisition form. For test requested, write "COVID-19" under Comments/Other test requests. Ensure that all information is legible, complete and accurate. Place the completed form into the outside pocket of the specimen bag. Do **not** enclose it inside the bag with the specimen tube.

### Holding:

Store specimens refrigerated (2 – 8 °C) until ready to send to the state laboratory. Specimens may be held refrigerated for up to 72 hours. Specimens must be received at the RI State Health Laboratories within three days of being collected.

### Packaging:

Specimens must be packaged and shipped in accordance with appropriate Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for Category B Biological Substances.

- Place the securely sealed Ziploc bag containing the specimen tube **along with the frozen ice pack** into the styrofoam box that is contained within the cardboard shipping box. If using an alternate type of packaging, make certain it is compliant and labeled appropriately for Category B Biological Substances.
- Ensure that the outer packing box that is supplied with the specimen kit is sealed securely with packaging tape.

- Ensure shipper label information for your facility is completed in full and affixed to the outer package.

### Transport:

- Submitters are responsible for arranging for specimens to be transported to the RI State Health Laboratory. (ex: commercial courier)

**For questions regarding specimen collection, packaging and shipping: Call STARLAB Corp at (847)329-7500 and ask to speak with the person who can assist with COVID packaging and shipping questions.**