

Alternate Specimen Collection & Laboratory Testing for COVID-19

FOLLOW THE MOST UP TO DATE GUIDANCE FOR TESTING INDICATIONS AT

saskatchewan.ca/COVID19

During limited supply of Nasopharyngeal swabs, the following alternate instructions may be used for the collection of **Sputum** specimens from inpatients with evidence of a lower respiratory tract infection and productive cough

What you will need:

- ◆ Sterile specimen container
- ◆ COVID-19 Pandemic Requisition
- ◆ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for droplet and contact precautions (i.e. gloves, gown, surgical mask, eye protection)



IMPORTANT: DO NOT induce sputum for COVID-19 testing. DO NOT submit sputum for patients without evidence of a lower respiratory tract infection

How to Collect a Sputum Sample: *At least 5 mL (1 teaspoon) of specimen is required*

Step 1: Instruct the patient to gargle and rinse mouth with water

Step 2: Have the patient face away from others, inhale deeply several times, and exhale with an explosive cough. This should produce mucus from the lungs

Saliva (spit) from the mouth is not acceptable. Saliva (spit) has a clear color. This is not suitable specimen and will not be processed by the laboratory

Step 3: The patient should cough specimen into the sterile container, replace lid and tighten securely so sample will not leak

Be sure to label all specimens with the patients' Name (First and Last), DOB and Health Services Number (HSN) to ensure electronic patient record alignment of test results

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(Continued)

Completing COVID-19 Pandemic Requisition

- ◆ Indicate full name, HSN, and DOB, gender, complete address and phone number in patient information box (eg. Patient Name and Address box) to ensure test results are aligned in electronic patient record
- ◆ Indicate name and location of testing or assessment site where specimen is being collected
- ◆ Indicate collection date and time
- ◆ Indicate ordering health care provider including complete address, phone and fax number
- ◆ Indicate if additional copies of patient report are required (eg. Public Health, Employee Health, other physicians)
- ◆ Indicate prioritization, test indications (symptomatic or asymptomatic)

Refer to Work Standard: Completing Requisitions for COVID-19 Testing Requests

Testing for Influenza A/B/RSV can be performed on the same specimen.

Prepare Specimen for Transport

1. Place labelled specimen inside a Biohazard bag (or any plastic zippered bag) with absorptive material
2. Place completed requisition into rear pouch of Biohazard bag (or outside plastic bag)
3. Deliver to nearest laboratory as soon as possible. Keep specimens cool (refrigerate) until they are transported
4. If you use lab totes (including all peripheral labs and collection centres):
5. Secure zipper with YELLOW zip tie or affix a yellow label for rapid identification as a STAT specimen

Example



PATIENTS SUSPECTED OF COVID-19 MUST SELF-ISOLATE OR BE PLACED ON DROPLET/CONTACT + PRECAUTIONS IF THEY ARE ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL OR RESIDE IN LONG TERM CARE

If you have questions relating to testing, please contact the Microbiologist on-call:

Roy Romanow Provincial Laboratory—306-798-1234

Regina and south—306-766-4444 (switchboard)

Saskatoon and north—306-655-1000 (switchboard)

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