

## Influenza Collection Protocol ©

Patients require a nasopharyngeal swab and a throat swab. Both swabs should be put into one pink/orange Viral Transport Media (VTM) tube.

### Nasopharyngeal Swab

Use a pernasal tube with non-wooden shaft and synthetic fibre tip:



1. Label sample tube with patient name, NHI number (if known), date of birth and date of collection.
2. Insert swab into one nostril, parallel to the palate, rotate gently and advance until resistance is felt (one eye often waters when swab is in correct position). (see images below of adult and child swabs)
3. Press swab tip on the mucosal surface of the mid-inferior turbinate (see diagram), leave in place for a few seconds, then slowly withdraw with a rotating motion.
4. Place tip of swab back into swab collection tube containing VTM and carefully break or cut the shaft of the swab.
5. Close the lid tightly.
6. Place the sample tube in a plastic specimen bag, then double-bag for protection against spillage.
7. The sample in VTM should be delivered to the laboratory promptly.

### Throat Swab

Use a plastic shafted dacron swab:

1. Label sample tube with patient name, NHI number (if known), date of birth and date of collection.
2. Get patient to say 'ahhh' and vigorously swab both tonsillar areas and posterior nasopharynx. Use tongue depressor to depress tongue in order to prevent contamination of swab with saliva.
3. Place swab back into swab collection tube in VTM and snap the shaft of the swab. (see image below of black topped throat swab with no media or gel in tube)
4. Close the lid tightly.
5. Place the sample tube in a plastic specimen bag, then double-bag it for protection against any spillage.
6. The sample in VTM should be delivered to the laboratory promptly.

Swabs and VTM are available by contacting CHLabs Client Services (email [labinfo@cdhb.govt.nz](mailto:labinfo@cdhb.govt.nz)) or 03 364 0484 (80484).

