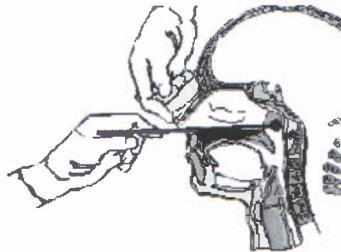


Instructions for Collection of Specimens for Identification of Influenza and Other Viral Respiratory Agents

Specimen Collection Criteria:

- a) Specimen collection must be within 72 hours of onset
 - b) Patient has fever (temperature > 100° F oral or equivalent) **AND**
 - c) Patient has cough or sore throat (in the absence of a known cause)
1. Always store VTM (viral transport medium) at room temperature. Make sure the VTM is a clear pink solution before use. (Discard if it is cloudy or turns yellow.)
 2. Use only the sterile swab provided. (Do **NOT** use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts.)
 3. Collect **ONE** nasopharyngeal swab.
 4. Nasopharyngeal swab procedure (see diagram for appropriate positioning):
 - a) Remove swab from its wrapper.
 - b) Immobilize patient's head and insert swab into a nostril back to the posterior nares.
 - c) Leave the swab in place for up to 10 seconds. If resistance is encountered during insertion of the swab, remove it and attempt insertion on the opposite nostril.
 - d) Remove the swab slowly.



5. Break/bend the swab shaft to permit closure of vial cap and make sure screw caps are securely fastened and taped with parafilm or masking tape to avoid leakage. Place the specimen in the same tube of viral transport media. Write the patient's **name, date** of specimen collection, and **specimen type** (source of specimen) on the tube. **Refrigerate tube immediately.**
6. Seal the specimen tube in the zip-lock bag with biohazard symbol. Complete enclosed "Specimen Submission Form" and place in the outside pouch of the bag **OR** staple or tape the form to the outside of the zip-lock bag.
7. Submit specimen to the diagnostic laboratory that the specimen collection kit was obtained from.

If you have any questions regarding the Influenza Surveillance Program or submission of specimens, please contact the Hawaii State Department of Health, Disease Investigation Branch at 586-4586.