

Date: March 15, 2020

To: COVID-19 Assessment Centres

From: Alberta Public Health Laboratory

Re: Collection of Samples for COVID-19 Using APTIMA Unisex Collection Kit

ISSUE

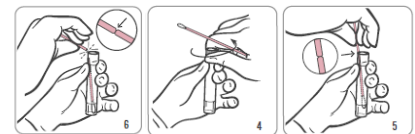
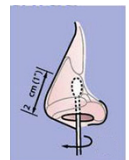
- There is limited supply of universal/viral transport media (UTM) nasopharyngeal collection kits to screen for COVID-19.
- Effective immediately, COVID 19 Assessment Centres will be provided with APTIMA® Unisex Swab Specimen Collection Kits for COVID-19 testing
- This document describes how to collect specimens using the APTIMA® Unisex Swab Specimen Collection Kit

ACTION

- Follow the instructions below for the collection of nasopharyngeal (NP) specimens using the APTIMA® Unisex Swab Specimen Collection Kit

COLLECTION USING APTIMA UNISEX COLLECTION KIT- see page two for photo

1. Store tubes at room temperature
2. Fill out the requisition provided for COVID-19 or enter into your EMR and label the tube with:
 - Name and date of birth
 - Unique identifiers (MRN or Alberta Health Care Number).
 - Time of collection
 - Include ordering provider (designated medical officer of health or other physician) on the requisition.
 - If using a printed label make sure the label is properly affixed to the tube.
3. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as per protocol for collection of COVID-19 NP samples.
4. Explain procedure to the patient
5. Ask the patient to tilt his/her head back. Insert the Unisex swab (blue) approximately 3 cm (until you encounter resistance). Rotate the swab inside of the nostril for 3 seconds, covering all surfaces. Repeat the procedure in the other nostril with the same swab.
6. While holding the swab in your hand, unscrew the tube cap (foil top). Do not spill the tube contents. Immediately place the swab into the transport tube so that the line is in line with the top edge of the tube and carefully break the shaft. The swab will drop to the bottom of the vial. **DO NOT FORCE THE SWAB THROUGH OR DO NOT PUNCTURE THE FOIL CAP.**
7. Discard the top portion of the shaft. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube.
8. Place tube in biohazard bag. Place requisition in pouch outside of the bag.
9. Refrigerate tubes or store on ice if possible. If no refrigeration available, store at room temperature and ship to lab within 24h.



Approved by: Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical-Scientific Director, Public Health, APL

Questions: Call the Virologist on Call (VOC) (Edmonton 780-407-8822; Calgary 403-333-4942)

**Hologic Unisex Swab and Collection Tube
(Kits come with a white swab also-DO NOT USE)**

