

How to Collect a Nasopharyngeal Specimen

Nasopharyngeal Swab Collection

1. Use a minitip swab appropriate for the test ordered
2. As the minitip swab is removed from the package, bend the wire to the shape of the nasal passage. Maintain sterility of the swab.
3. Tip patient's head back and swab through the nostril into the nasopharynx.
 - If any resistance is met in the passageways, do not force the swab. Try the other nostril.
 - If the swab cannot be passed through either nostril, it may be bent at a right angle and passed through the mouth to the nasopharynx, taking care to avoid mouth and throat contamination of the swab.
4. Rotate the swab on the nasopharyngeal membrane to allow the swab to absorb organisms.
5. Remove the swab carefully and place in the transport medium.

Nasopharyngeal Washings

1. With patient in supine position, tilt head back at 70° angle.
2. Attach sterile syringe to catheter. Insert catheter into nostril and instill 2 to 3 ml normal bacteriostatic saline into one nostril and pharynx.
3. Aspirate fluid out of nostril with syringe.
4. Gently suction with syringe while withdrawing catheter.
5. Place washings into a screw capped container for transport.