



Specimen Collection, Packaging and Transport Guidelines for 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease

Title: Specimen Collection, Packaging and Transport Guidelines for 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease

Scope: To be used by the treating physicians, public health experts and laboratory personnel from Government health authorities/hospitals/ planning to collect appropriate clinical samples as indicated for diagnosis of 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease.

Purpose: Specimen collection, packaging and transport of clinical specimens to Influenza Lab in Division of Microbiology at National Centre for Disease control for diagnosis of 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The clinicians with updated interim guidance on timely, effective, and safe supportive management of patients with 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease should be well versed with suspected case definition from MOHFW
<https://mohfw.gov.in/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20on%20Clinical%20management%20of%20severe%20acute%20respiratory%20illness.pdf>
- The suspected case definition as given by the health authorities, Government of India must be followed.
- The appropriate clinical sample needs to be collected by health care worker trained in specimen collection in presence of a clinician.
- Samples should be collected with all biosafety precautions and should be accompanied with detailed history of patient on the proforma which can be obtained from the testing laboratory in standard triple packaging.
- Personal protective equipment (apron, hand gloves, face shield, N95 Masks etc.) need to be used and all biosafety precautions should be followed while carrying out sample collection and packaging.

Specimen collection, storage and transport details:

(Adapted from WHO guidelines 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease)

Specimen type	Collection materials	Transport to laboratory (48 -72 hrs)	Storage till testing
Nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swab (Both swabs should be placed in the same tube to increase the viral load)	Dacron or polyester flocked swabs*	4 °C	≤72 hrs: 4 °C >72 hrs: -70 °C
Bronchoalveolar lavage	Sterile container*	4 °C	≤48 hours: 4 °C >48 hours: -70 °C
Tracheal aspirate, nasopharyngeal aspirate or nasal wash	Sterile container*	4 °C	≤48 hours: 4 °C >48 hours: -70 °C
Sputum (Ensure the material is from the lower respiratory tract)	Sterile container	4 °C	≤48 hours: 4 °C >48 hours: -70 °C

*For transport of samples for viral detection, use VTM (viral transport medium). Avoid repeated freezing and thawing of specimens.

Specimen packaging and transport:

Sample should be safely packed in Triple container packing and should be transported under cold chain to the reference laboratory with prior intimation. The packaging consists of three layers as follows.

- Primary receptacle: A labelled primary watertight, leak-proof receptacle containing the specimen. The receptacle is wrapped in enough absorbent material to absorb all fluid in case of breakage.
- Secondary receptacle: A second durable, watertight, leak-proof receptacle to enclose and protect the primary receptacle(s). Several wrapped primary receptacles may be placed in one secondary receptacle. Sufficient additional absorbent material must be used to cushion multiple primary receptacles.
- Outer shipping package. The secondary receptacle is placed in an outer shipping package which protects it and its contents from outside influences such as physical damage and water while in transit.

Specimen data forms, letters and other types of information that identify or describe the specimen for "testing of 2019 nCoV - Acute Respiratory Disease " and also identify the shipper and receiver should be taped to the outside of the secondary receptacle.