



Nasopharyngeal Swab Procedure

1. Tilt patient's head backwards slightly and insert swab into one nostril.
2. Slide along floor of nose until resistance is met in the nasopharynx.
 - Point the swab slightly downwards, towards the tragus or ear canal.
 - The depth to insert is approximately the distance from the nostril to the tragus or ear canal.
 - Keep close to the nasal septum.
 - If resistance is met early, it could imply a deviated nasal septum. Do not force the swab against resistance. Remove the swab and repeat through the other nostril.
3. Leave swab for 3 seconds to absorb secretions, then rotate swab 3 times in the nasopharynx.
4. Remove the swab.
5. Repeat procedure through the other nostril with the same swab.
6. Place tip of swab into transport media tube, snap/cut off applicator stick and cap the tube.

Oropharyngeal Swab Procedure

1. Tilt patient's head backwards slightly and ask patient to open mouth widely.
2. Use a tongue depressor to depress the back of the tongue.
3. Ask patient to say "Ahhh", which elevates the soft palate.
4. Use the swab to brush against both right and left tonsils 3 times AND brush 3 times against the posterior wall of the oropharynx.
5. Do this gently but quickly to avoid the gag reflex.
6. Place tip of swab into transport media tube, snap/cut off applicator stick and cap the tube.

Please refer to the Instructional Videos on the Society's website at www.sohnss.org.

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References:

1. Laboratory testing for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in suspected human cases. Interim guidance. World Health Organization. 2020.
2. Interim guidelines for collecting, handling and testing clinical specimens from persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Center for Disease Control and Prevention, USA. 2020.