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Influenza Surveillance Specimen Collection and Transport Requirements

Specimen: Nasopharyngeal swabs (preferred)
Standard, contact, and airborne precautions are recommended for patient management; this includes collection of respiratory specimens.

Volume: 2-3 mL viral transport media . Viral transport media container should be labeled with the patient first and last name, collection date and time, and specimen source.

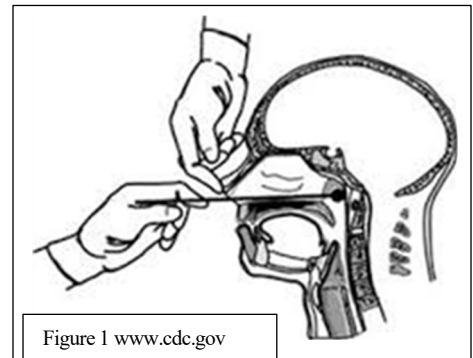
Transportation: Follow enclosed FedEx packaging & shipping instructions. The specimens must be refrigerated from time of collection to arrival at NPHL, a pre-frozen gel pack is recommended. Samples must be received in lab within 72 hours of collection.

Courier service may be available depending on your location and courier provider through the Nebraska Public Health Partner Courier Network. Please contact NPHL Client Services at 402.559.2440 or 866.290.1406 if you are not sure of the specimen transport option available to your facility.

Specimen Collection Procedures

Nasopharyngeal Swab:

1. Using the specimen collection kit provided, insert the flocked flexible minitip through nares, parallel to the palate (NOT upwards) until resistance is encountered or the distance is equivalent to that from the ear to the nostril of the patient indicating contact with the nasopharynx. See Figure 1.
2. Gently, rub and roll the swab. Leave the swab in place for several seconds to absorb secretions before removing.
3. Remove swab from nares and place the swab into the viral transport media provided and seal.
4. Transport refrigerated. Specimen must be received at NPHL within 72 hours of collection.
5. A video demonstrating the collection of a nasopharyngeal swab is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osl9W-O0O5g&t=21s>.





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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Specimen Shipping Instructions Using Nebraska Public Health Partner Courier Network

1. Place the labeled viral transport media in biohazard bag and secure closure.
2. Complete ordering through the NUIrt system and print out the batch list. Make a copy of the batch list if wanted for your records.
3. Place the batch list in the outside plastic sleeve of the biohazard bag.
4. Place the "NPHL" and "ship refrigerated" sticker on the outside of the plastic sleeve.
5. Place entire package in your laboratory's refrigerated storage area for usual courier pickup.
6. Courier to NPHL through your reference laboratory courier. The specimen may also be shipped with the NPHL or Regional Pathology Services courier if this service is provided to your facility.
7. Call NPHL client services with questions or concerns at 402.559.2440 or toll free at 866.290.1406.