**Nasopharyngeal swab collection for upper respiratory virus testing**

**(Influenza, RSV, Respiratory Pathogen Panel)**

Supplies:

1. Sterile Mini-tip Flexible Flocked Swab and Universal Transport Media (obtain supplies by calling the Microbiology Lab at x5131; store at room temperature prior to use)
2. Patient Label with name, medical record number, date and time of collection, initials of collector, and specimen source
3. Personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, mask, gown if indicated)
4. Specimen biohazard bag

Collection Instructions:

1. Perform hand hygiene and put on personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves and procedure mask; also gown if patient is in contact isolation).
2. Remove excess secretions from the anterior nares.
3. Tilt the patient’s head back 70 degrees.
4. Insert swab through the nostril along the base of the septum until it reaches the nasopharynx. (Swab should reach depth equal to distance from nostrils to outer opening of the ear.) Leave swab in place for several seconds to absorb secretions.
5. Slowly remove the swab while rotating it. (If possible, sample from both nostrils with the same swab.)
6. Place tip of swab into sterile universal transport media tube, snap/cut off the applicator stick at the mark indicated and secure the cap.
7. Apply the patient label to the tube, place tube in biohazard bag and transport to the laboratory ASAP. If transport is delayed > 20 minutes, store at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours; keep on wet ice while in transit. For long term storage, store at -70°C and transport on dry ice.

 