

Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2009 1:36 PM

Subject: FROM CLINICAL LABS -- Respiratory Viral Specimen Collection

TO: UCSF PHYSICIANS, NURSES, ALLIED HEALTH PROVIDERS

RE: RESPIRATORY VIRAL SPECIMEN COLLECTION

A new type of nasopharyngeal swab (flocked swab) can be substituted for nasal wash when collecting samples for respiratory viral testing by direct fluorescent antigen (DFA) and *polymerase chain reaction* (PCR) methods. Nasal wash, nasal aspirate and bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) samples are still accepted for viral testing.

Flocked swabs are preferable to nasopharyngeal washes for specimen collection due to:

- Ease of collection
- Superior recovery of virus

Order testing as "Flocked swab for respiratory virus DFA."

Flocked swabs will be stocked on all units this week, Oct. 12-16. They can be used as soon as they are available. Flocked swabs should **NOT** be used for collecting other types of samples for testing (throat swab, anterior nares swab, wound swab, etc.).

For respiratory virus testing sent to the UCSF Microbiology Lab:

- 1. Use flocked swab/universal transport medium for collection.**
- 2. Insert swab into the nostril, gently rotating the swab inward until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates.**
- 3. Rotate the swab a few times against the nasopharyngeal wall (approximately 10 seconds) and then withdraw swab.**
- 4. Insert swab into container with universal transport medium. Break end of swab so top of vial can be screwed on securely.**
- 5. Appropriately label specimen and send to the laboratory with a completed microbiology requisition.**

NOTE: Use of a flocked swab for sample collection may be contraindicated after recent maxillofacial surgery.

More information and videos demonstrating proper collection technique are at:

http://labmedx.ucsfmedicalcenter.org/videos/swab_technique.html

For additional information, contact Dr. Steve Miller, director of the UCSF Clinical Microbiology Laboratory, at 353-9630 or by e-mail at steve.miller@ucsfmedctr.org.

Please share this e-mail with allied health providers in your department or unit.