

COVID-19 – COLLECTION OF UPPER RESPIRATORY SWABS FOR TESTING FOR SARS-COV-2

This Local Operating Procedure is developed to guide safe clinical practice in Newborn Care Centre (NCC) at The Royal Hospital for Women. Individual patient circumstances may mean that practice diverges from this Local Operating Procedure.

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INTRODUCTION

Current testing guidelines for SARS-CoV-2 is a combined nose and throat swab aiming to collect epithelial cells. The indication for a swab should be assessed according to current guidelines and case definitions in NSW Health.

1. AIM

- Successful collection of epithelial cells from nose and throat swabs

2. Patient

- Neonates

3. STAFF

- Medical and nursing staff

4. EQUIPMENT

- Pathology request
- Viral swab (green)
- Tongue depressor
- PPE- face mask, gloves, gown and protective eye wear
- Sucrose 25% or breast milk

5. CLINICAL PRACTICE

Procedure:

1. Check the pathology request form for patients details, date of collection, clinical history, name and provider number of medical officer and the test requested – PCR for ‘SARVS-CoV-2’ or ‘COVID19’:
 - URGENT – INPATIENT (6-10 hours result) – Refer to educational notes
 - URGENT – RAPID TEST (1.5 hours result) – Refer to educational notes
2. Label viral swab tube with patient details.
3. Perform hand hygiene.
4. Don PPE.
5. Give 25% sucrose or mother’s breast milk for pain relief.
6. Ensure infant is in a comfortable and secure position.
7. Moisten swab with transport medium fluid.
8. Using a tongue depressor, flatten tongue and insert swab
9. Swab tonsillar beds and back of throat, avoiding tongue.
10. Gently rotate brush tip for 3-5 seconds.
11. Using the same swab, hold with a pencil grip and insert vertically (with infant lying flat) into one nostril parallel to the palate.
12. Insert swab to 1 cm or until resistance is met and rotate swab 5 times against the nasal wall.
13. Repeat the same method for other nostril.
14. Remove swab and insert into transport medium vial.
15. Safely remove and dispose of PPE.
16. Perform hand hygiene.

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6. DOCUMENTATION

- eMR
- Pathology Request Form

7. EDUCATIONAL NOTES

- Swab must be moistened in the transport fluid prior to taking swab to ensure adequately capturing SARS-CoV-2 antibodies.
- “URGENT – INPATIENT” pathology request at the time of ordering in eMR and on the pathology request form together with clinical notes stating the reason along with the name and provider number of the requesting doctor. The test result will be ready within 6-10 hours.
- “URGENT – RAPID TEST – APPROVED BY ID/VIROLOGY”:
 - Must be discussed with an Infectious Diseases Consultant at Prince of Wales Hospital or the Senior Medical Virologist (contact through switch)
 - Requests for rapid tests must be received with a request form specifically stating: “URGENT – RAPID TEST”
 - Clinical notes stating the reason for the tests (see below):
 - Where urgent initiation of non-invasive ventilation (NIV) is required
 - For urgent organ and tissue donation (donors and recipients)
 - For pregnant women requiring urgent caesarean section
 - The name and department of the Infectious Diseases Physician or Virologist who was consulted and has approved the rapid test
 - Generally expect the rapid test result within 1.5 hours
- Contact the laboratory on 9382 9133 if you have any further questions.

8. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/CLINICAL PRACTICE LOP

- Neonatal Medical LOP – COVID-19: Newborn infants born to women with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

9. RISK RATING

- High

10. NATIONAL STANDARD

- Standard 1 Clinical Governance
- Standard 3 Preventing and Controlling Healthcare-Associated Infections
- Standard 5 Comprehensive Care
- Standard 6 Communicating for safety

11. ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SARS-CoV-2	Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2	PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
NCC	Newborn Care Centre		

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12. REFERENCES

- Clinical Excellence Commission, NSW Government, Accessed: 8. September 2020
<http://cec.health.nsw.gov.au/keep-patients-safe/C>
- Covid-19 – newborn infants born to women with suspected, probable or confirmed covid-19, Royal Hospital for Women Clinical guidelines. Accessed: 8. September 2020
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- New requirements and criteria- Requests for Urgent or Rapid SARS-CoV-2. Memorandum issued by NSW Health Pathology on 13th August 2020.
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/communities-ofpractice/Pages/guide-rapid-prc-testing.aspx>

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REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY

September 2020 Primary Document Created and Approved by NCC LOPs Committee

FOR REVIEW: 2021