

Laboratory News

VOL. 44, NO. 8 – September 15, 2021

Nasal Swab Specimens are now acceptable for COVID 19 Routine Testing

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Beginning 9/15/2021, Marshfield Labs will accept nasal specimens for COVID-19 testing using the new test code NASCOV.

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Nasal Swab Specimens

Anterior nasal specimens are considered acceptable specimens under the emergency use authorization for molecular testing. However, all performance characteristics of the assay such as sensitivity and specificity were determined using nasopharyngeal specimens. At this time nasal specimens can only be used for COVID-19 testing and not Influenza or RSV testing.

Nasal swab collections are intended for the screening of asymptomatic patients to increase testing for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 infections.

It is still recommended that symptomatic patients be tested with nasopharyngeal collection kits using test code COV19.

Test Details

NASCOV testing is performed on the Marshfield campus using the routine high-throughput method.

- This test is not available STAT.
- Turnaround time is ≤48 hours.
- Only designated NASCOV kits containing larger tipped nasal swabs are acceptable for NASCOV testing. Fine-tipped, flexible nasopharyngeal swabs are not appropriate for the collection of anterior nasal specimens and will be rejected.
- If testing is ordered for travel purposes, note that requirements vary by travel destination and nasal swab collection may not be suitable.

How to Order This Test

Test name: Nasal COVID 19 Nucleic Acid Test

Test Code: NASCOV

Specimen: Azer PBS Saline Kit (yellow label)

Storage: Refrigerated up to 72 hours or frozen > 72 hours.

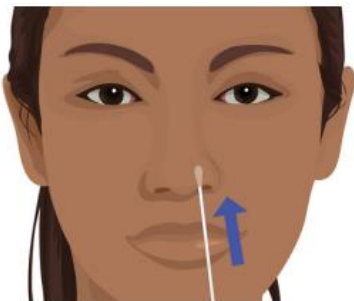
Test availability: visit [Marshfield Labs' Test Reference Manual](#).

Qualitative interpretation: Reported as Negative, Positive, or Indeterminate

CPT Code: U0003

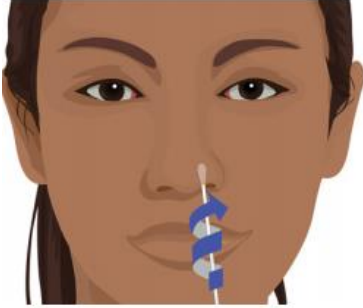
Collection Instructions for Bi-lateral Anterior Nasal Swab

1. Properly disinfect hands and surface where the collection kits are open prior to collection.
2. Remove the swab from the package. Do not touch the soft end with your hands or anything else.



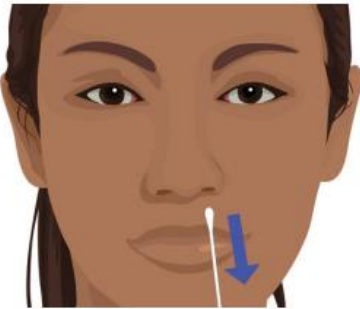
3. Insert the entire soft end of the swab into nostril no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch (1.5 cm) into the nostril.

4. Slowly rotate the swab, gently pressing against the inside of nostril at least 4 times for a total of 15 seconds. Get as much nasal discharge as possible on the soft end of the swab.



5. Gently remove the swab.

6. Using the same swab, repeat steps 4–6 in other nostril with the same end of the swab.



8. Place swab, tip first, into the transport tube provided. Refrigerate on transport.

Note: If the anterior nares sample is not collected by a healthcare worker it is not acceptable for testing.

Questions

For additional information, please contact Marshfield Labs Customer Support (800-222-5835).

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References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interim Guidelines for Collecting and Handling of Clinical Specimens for COVID-19 Testing <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>