Nasopharyngeal Specimen Collection for Viral Respiratory Pathogens
A Guide for Providers

**MATERIALS**
- Nasopharyngeal swab (flexible shaft) with dacron or rayon tip.
- Viral transport media.

**INFECTION CONTROL PRECAUTIONS**
Use mask and gloves.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Insert swab straight (not upwards) through nostril to posterior nasopharynx (same as from nostrils to external opening of ear).
2. Rotate swab a few times to obtain infected cells.
3. For an optimal sample, repeat procedure using other nostril.
4. Place swab in transport media.
5. Bend or cut shaft to completely seal transport tube.

**TRANSPORT & STORAGE**
- Send specimen to lab immediately (testing sensitivity decreases over time).
- Refrigerate specimen at 2° - 4° (36° - 40° F) during storage and transport.