GUIDANCE FOR CLINICAL LABORATORIES HANDLING SPECIMENS FOR COVID-19 TESTING

Testing for COVID-19 must be approved in advance by the NYC DOHMH. Do not send specimens to the NYC PHL unless the requesting provider has received DOHMH approval by the Coronavirus Testing Call Center (866-692-3641). Provider testing guidance can be found on the DOHMH website:

https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/novel-respiratory-viruses.page

If DOHMH approves testing, the preferred specimen combination for testing is:

- 1 nasopharyngeal (NP) swab
- 1 nasal swab (anterior nares) may be self collected by patient with healthcare personnel supervision
- 1 saliva specimen self collected by patient with healthcare personnel supervision

Additional acceptable specimen types include:

- 1 NP swab and 1 oropharyngeal (OP) swab in the same viral transport medium collection tube (NP/OP swab)
- 1 lower respiratory tract specimen if patient is able to produce and/or hospitalized (sputum or tracheal aspirate)

and submit to the clinical laboratory at your facility. Guidance for specimen self-collection can be found here.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Do not attempt viral culture of any respiratory specimens.

Please visit nyc.gov/health for the latest updates, including critical information distributed through the Health Alert Network (HAN)

CDC has released interim laboratory biosafety guidelines for handling and processing specimens associated with COVID-19. For detailed information, please visit:


For specimen collection and handling guidance and the link to order NYC PHL tests electronically through eOrder, please visit:

https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/reporting-and-services/public-health-lab.page#forms

For CDC and WHO guidance for healthcare professionals and laboratories, please visit:


**eOrder**

- eOrder is the NYC Public Health Laboratory web-based test ordering and result reporting system.
- Facilities must order COVID-19 tests through eOrder. When doing so, please note that only an eOrder form should be submitted. **DO NOT** send a paper requisition and an eOrder form together with the same specimen.
- If your laboratory does not already have an eOrder account, please visit the PHL website for more information.

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