



Taupo - Influenza and RSV Testing: Winter 2017

Below is the Taupo Hospital testing protocol with regards to these two respiratory viruses for the winter season of 2017.

- Test performed in Pathlab Taupo; Cepheid GeneXpert Influenza/RSV molecular PCR

Influenza/RSV Testing Guidance

- Main reason for Influenza/RSV swabbing is for infection control purposes, therefore only required in those staying in hospital or being transferred to Rotorua Hospital. (Consider Oseltamavir if sick, immunocompromised, pregnant, symptoms < 48 hours. *Note: not funded in the community.*)
- Isolation can be around the bed with curtains closed, excellent hand hygiene, plus gloves mask and gown.
- If proven Influenza/RSV can cohort patients together of the same infection i.e. Influenza A vs influenza B vs RSV.
- Influenza patients require isolation for 5 days and RSV for 7 days if remain in hospital for that duration. However patient should be discharged as soon as clinical condition allow.

Acceptable samples:

- 1) **Nasopharyngeal swab placed in Viral Transport Medium (VTM).** (Nasopharyngeal swab should be cut or broken off into Viral Transport Medium.)

The current molecular assay for Influenza/RSV is designed and validated for swabs transported in VTM.



Examples of thin shaft nasopharyngeal swabs.



Example of Viral Transport Medium (VTM).
(Note that the swabs that come with the viral transport medium are too thick to perform a nasopharyngeal swab and must not be used.)

- 2) **Nasopharyngeal Aspirate (NPA)**

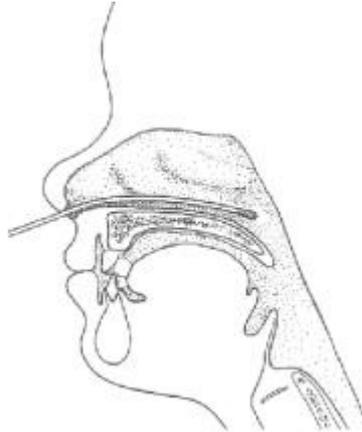
Please note that throat swabs and nasal swabs have sub-optimal sensitivity for respiratory virus PCR and will not be processed.

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Procedure for taking a nasopharyngeal swab:

- The patient can either lie flat on a bed or sit up with his/her head back against a wall.
- **The nasopharyngeal swab is slowly inserted through the nose into the upper pharyngeal cavity. It should pass along the floor of the nasal passage (parallel to the palate) in order to minimise the risk of damage to the nasopharyngeal roof. (see diagram)**
- If any resistance is felt, try the other side. Some patients have a deviated septum on one side.
- Once the swab is in position it is preferable to leave it in place for 20 – 30 seconds.



If there are any queries with regards to the above testing protocol please contact the laboratory.

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