

## Suspected COVID-19 sampling and packaging guidance

Please follow the instructions below to ensure safe handling and transportation.


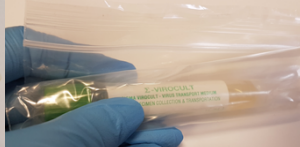



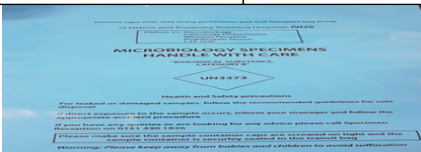
You have been provided with:

- One vial of viral transport medium and swab(s) – the type and number of swabs (1 or 2) provided will be dependent on availability. **If two swabs are provided, use one for sampling nose and one for throat and place both into the viral transport medium vial. If only one swab provided, use for sampling throat first then nose.**
- Two zip seal biohazard sample bags for wrapping sample for COVID-19.
- Blue microbiology transport bag.

You will also need (but not provided) blue Microbiology request form (for attaching Medway requests to).

### Process:

- **Complete MEDWAY test request** for *COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus PCR* and attach to blue Microbiology request forms with relevant clinical details and travel history (if relevant).
- Label viral transport media with patient details (minimum 3 patient identifiers) use MEDWAY labels.
- **Wear gloves throughout.**
- Using collection swabs, sample throat then nose and break off swab into viral transport media, ensure swabs are not too tall for tubes or they will leak and NOT be tested. If using two swabs can be placed in a single vial of transport medium.
- Please do not include routine blood samples in with Microbiology COVID-19 samples.
- SOHT Please label blue microbiology transport bags which contain COVID-19 samples ONLY with **Microbiology Sample: Only to be opened in Microbiology**
- If possible, send sputum or other lower respiratory tract sample (e.g. tracheal aspirate or broncho-alveolar lavage) in sterile universal container – double bagged as shown in figures below.
- Whiston hospital transport via air tube pod to location 712.
- Southport hospital transport via air tube pod to location 113
- Ormskirk hospital transport via air tube pod to location 888

			
<p>1. Ensure lid is <b>tightly sealed</b> decontaminate outside if necessary. <b>Leaking samples will NOT be tested. One set = N&amp;T for each test</b></p>	<p>2. Place sample in clear sample bag, roll up and zip seal, <b>change gloves</b>.</p>	<p>3. Place bagged sample into 2<sup>nd</sup> clear sample bag, roll up and zip seal.</p>	<p>4. Place double bagged sample into Microbiology request sample bag</p>
			
<p>5. You should have a set Nose and Throat swabs in the same tube which should be double bagged and attached to a completed MEDWAY request form for COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus PCR. <b>NB: Nose &amp; Throat is one sample.</b></p>		<p>6. Place samples and request form into blue Microbiology transport bag, seal and deliver to Pathology Microbiology. The Pod system can be used for internal site transfers.</p>	

All results will be issued as electronic reports.

Turn-around time for results is 48-72 hours from receipt at the Whiston laboratory.

As the background prevalence of influenza/RSV is currently very low, routine testing for these is not required unless patient is unwell enough to be admitted to ICU. For patients not on ICU, if influenza/RSV testing is clinically indicated, please contact the Microbiology Laboratory (x1837) for the appropriate transport medium.

This is evolving disease guidance may be subject to change and amended or updated as required.

Swabs or viral transport medium stock may vary, dependent upon supply availability.

Please contact Microbiology if further guidance is required on 01514301652 (24/7) or 01514301446 (8am-4pm) Microbiology seniors