

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for taking COVID-19 naso/oropharyngeal swabs

This guidance is based on Infection Prevention and Control best practice with regards to Standard and Transmission Based Precautions.¹

The wearing of PPE is to mitigate any infectious risk posed to the healthcare worker when collecting a naso/oropharyngeal swab. Close contact is required and the person may cough and/or sneeze during taking of the swab or upon removal of the swab from the nasal passage.

General advice:

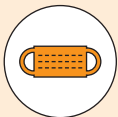
- Stand slightly to the side of the patient when taking the swab, not directly in front of them
- Move away when the procedure is completed
- Patients should be provided with tissues to contain coughs and sneezes throughout the procedure
- Where possible use well ventilated spaces

If collecting a series of swabs (e.g. CTACs, testing clinics, sessional):

- Change your gloves and perform hand hygiene between each patient
- A medical mask can be worn for the duration of the session, or until the mask becomes damp or soiled
- Eye protection and an apron/gown can be worn for the duration of the session, as long as they are not damaged or visibly contaminated
- A medical mask is appropriate for drive through or outdoor testing facilities



Always perform hand hygiene during donning and doffing of PPE^{2,3}



Medical Mask⁴



Eye protection⁵



Gloves



Plastic apron or fluid-resistant long sleeve gown

Note: if the person does not meet either the Clinical or Higher Index of Suspicion (HIS) criteria for COVID-19, a plastic apron or fluid-resistant long sleeve gown is optional, based on a risk assessment of potential exposure to respiratory secretions.

- 1 See Standard Precautions in Frequently Asked Questions about PPE, available at: www.health.govt.nz/ppe-health
- 2 Refer to donning and doffing guidance available at: www.health.govt.nz/ppe-health
- 3 Perform hand hygiene according to the 5 moments for hand hygiene: www.handhygiene.org.nz
- 4 When collecting swabs in a confined poorly ventilated space medical mask or P2/N95 particulate respirator depending on risk assessment, see: *Primary Care Quick Reference Guide* www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-primary-care#quickref
- 5 Face shield or goggles. Prescription glasses are not classed as eye protection. Remember to clean reusable eye protection between uses.