



SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) by NAA SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS





Please note that information is changing rapidly, and ARUP will update this document frequently. For the most up-to-date version of this document, please visit aruplab.com/infectious-disease/coronavirus.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- A completed [Patient Demographics Form for Public Health Reporting](#) is required. Failure to provide this information may result in a follow-up call from your state or local health department.
- **Specimen source is required.**

Test Overview: The ARUP [SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\) by NAA](#) test detects the 2019 novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). This test is intended for the evaluation of respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in patients who meet the [CDC's guidance](#) for testing.

Reported in 1–4 days

Required Supplies				
Specimen Sources (Minimum volume 1.2 mL)	Nasopharyngeal swab	Oropharyngeal swab	Nasal swab	BAL, respiratory washes
VTM/UTM or equivalent* 	X	X	X	X
Saline 	X	X	X	
Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit 		X	X	
Aptima Specimen Transfer Kit 	X	X	X	

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Required Supplies				
Specimen Sources (Minimum volume 1.2 mL)	Nasopharyngeal swab	Oropharyngeal swab	Nasal swab	BAL, respiratory washes
cobas PCR Media Uni & Dual Swab Sample Kits 			X	
eSwab 	X	X	X	
Unpreserved specimen 				X

***VTM/UTM equivalent media: M4, M4-RT, M5, M5-RT, M6, UTM, BD Universal Transport Media (UVT), Puritan UniTranz media, Quest VCM (green lid), Starplex Multitrans System, Hardy Diagnostics VTM, UTM/VTM manufactured or aliquoted in the ARUP Reagent Laboratory.**

Unacceptable: wood-handled swabs; calcium alginate swabs

Additional Information on Alternative Supplies for COVID-19 Testing

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provides the most up-to-date list of acceptable alternative collection supplies, including media and swabs ([fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/faqs-diagnostic-testing-sars-cov-2-troubleobtainingviraltransport](https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/faqs-diagnostic-testing-sars-cov-2-troubleobtainingviraltransport)).

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Specimen Type: Nasopharyngeal swab in a collection tube with viral transport medium (or equivalent medium). Also acceptable: oropharyngeal or nasal swab.

Nasopharyngeal swab instructions (preferred specimen type):

- Seat the patient comfortably, and tilt the head back.
- Insert a nasal speculum, if available.
- Insert a swab through the nares until resistance is met due to contact with the nasopharynx.
- Rotate swab gently and maintain contact with the nasopharynx for 20–30 seconds or until coughing is induced.
- Break off the swab at the indicated spot, ensuring it fits completely within the collection tube.
- Close the tube, making sure the lid is secure. **Leaking tubes cannot be processed.**

Oropharyngeal swab instructions (alternate acceptable specimen):

- Seat the patient comfortably, and open the mouth.
- Insert a swab into the back of the throat.
- Rub the swab gently over the posterior oropharynx and both tonsillar pillars.
- Avoid touching other surfaces within the mouth, such as the tongue.
- Break off the swab at the indicated spot, ensuring it fits completely within the collection tube.
- Close the tube, making sure the lid is secure. **Leaking tubes cannot be processed.**

Nasal swab instructions (alternate acceptable specimen):

- Seat the patient comfortably, and tilt the head back.
- Insert the swab into the first nostril until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates (approximately 1 inch into the nostril).
- Rotate the swab a few times against the nasal wall, and remove from nostril.
- Using the same swab, carefully insert the swab into the second nostril until resistance is met at the level of the turbinates (approximately 1 inch into the nostril).
- Rotate the swab a few times against the nasal wall, and remove from nostril.
- Break off the swab at the indicated spot, ensuring it fits completely within the collection tube.
- Close the tube, making sure the lid is secure. **Leaking tubes cannot be processed.**

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Appropriate transport medium must be used. **Do not send swabs dry.**

Specimen Preparation: Please work with your laboratory management personnel, frontline clinicians, and collection locations to ensure the proper collection of COVID-19 specimens. Specimens that have leaked in transport **cannot be processed** and will need to be recollected.

- Label the tube with at least two patient identifiers, and place specimen in an individually sealed bag.
- Freeze and keep frozen.

When preparing COVID-19 specimens, please make sure to snap off the shaft of the swab at the scored indicator line, leaving the flocked end of the swab inside the collection tube. Securely recap the collection tube. Please work with your collection staff to determine the appropriate procedure for cutting swabs that do not have scored indicator lines. The shaft of the swab should not be in contact with the lid, as this prevents a secure seal.

Do not place films, such as paraffin film (parafilm), between the tube and the lid or around the lid of the transport container. Failure to prepare specimens correctly may cause leakage and will prevent tubes from being processed.

Storage/Transport Temperature: Frozen

Specimen Stability: Ambient: unacceptable; refrigerated: 2 days; frozen: 1 month

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Shipping Instructions: For the most up-to-date transport instructions, refer to the [ARUP Laboratory Test Directory](#). The CDC states that specimens should be handled, packed, and shipped according to UN 3373 Biological Substance, Category B requirements, which is the standard process for shipping specimens to ARUP (refer to the [ARUP Specimen Transport Guide](#)). Current transportation practices have not changed. Additional information is available in the [CDC's biosafety guidelines](#).

How to Order: Refer to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) by NAA (test code [3002638](#)) in the test directory. The order must be placed by an authorized healthcare professional within the United States.

How to Obtain Supplies: When supply chains allow, supplies are available through eSupply using ARUP Connect™. Clients may obtain their own supplies. Acceptable equivalents for transport medium and swabs are listed above.

Information:

2019 Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 information from ARUP: aruplab.com/infectious-disease/coronavirus

For Client Assistance:

ARUP Client Services: 800-522-2787
