Nasopharyngeal Specimen Collection with the Flocked Swab
For Respiratory Virus Testing

Beginning in October 2009, nasopharyngeal swab specimens can be submitted for the purpose of Respiratory Virus Testing.

- Based on MD order for "Respiratory Virus Ag/Culture"* collect specimen using the Copan© flocked swab. *As of November, there will be two different test codes fore respiratory virus testing—one for immunocompromised patients (7962) and one for all other patients (7961).
- Use the **flocked swab** only for the specimen collection and place it in the transport media tube. Specimens can be sent to the lab via the pneumatic tube system (in biohazard transport bag).
- Wear protective gear, based on the patient's isolation and/or clinical status.
- Have the patient blow his/her nose to clear the nasal passages of mucus. The accuracy of the test results depends on collecting actual **cells** from the nasopharynx—not mucus.
- The swab must come in contact with the posterior nasopharynx mucosa and be rotated several times (over 5-10 seconds) in order to collect sufficient cells. When used correctly, the design of the flocked swab ensures that cells are dislodged and collected along the tip of the swab.

Procedure

Obtain:

- 1 Copan© brand flexible **flocked sterile swab applicator** (SAP #114949)
- 1 **Viral Transport Medium** tube (SAP # 44674)

1. Peel open the pouch containing the collection swab and remove the swab. Holding the swab near the patient's head, **visualize the distance from the patient's nostril to the front of the ear**.
2. Use the thumb and forefinger of a gloved hand to grip the swab shaft at a point **equivalent to half the distance measured in step 1**. This distance approximates the mid-inferior turbinate sampling site.
3. Tilt the head of the patient backwards slightly. Have the patient close their eyes as this helps minimize discomfort. Gently insert the swab through one of the nostrils and horizontally into the nasal passage up to the measured distance on the swab shaft or until resistance is met. Rotate the swab 2 or 3 times and then hold the swab in place for 5-10 seconds to absorb the sample material.

4. Remove the swab and insert into the **Viral Transport Medium Tube**. **Break the plastic shaft swab at the break point line.** Replace cap and screw on tightly. Apply label. Place in biohazard transport bag and send to lab via the pneumatic tube.

For video demo of the procedure, click here (no speakers/headphones required):
http://copanusa.com/products/flockedswabs/animation.php
Dr. Kevin Fonseca's videos have the best depictions of this procedure.

Additional education:

http://www.copanusa.com/downloads/education/