



# Guidelines to collect and transport specimens in Influenza like Illness (ILI)/ Severe Acute Respiratory infection (SARI)

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Can download from <http://www.mri.gov.lk/en/departments/virology/sample-collection>

## Type of specimens:

- Nasopharyngeal aspirate (NPA) #
- Tracheal aspirate #
- Nasopharyngeal & Oropharyngeal (Nasal and throat swab) \*
- Postmortem biopsy of lung \*\*
- Broncho –Alveolar Lavage (BAL) #

**Note: All samples should be transported in VTM & ice (use an ice pack or vaccine container. Samples should not float on melted ice).**

**Make sure that samples are properly secured and not leaking.**

**DO NOT FREEZE** in an event of delay in transportation, but store at + 4°C (Maximum 48 hours).

## Samples should be collected in early phase of the infection

### Method of collection:

*(appropriate personal protection equipments (PPE) and biosafety precautions should be adhered)*

\* **Nasopharyngeal swab** – Insert thin flexible fine shafted swab into nasopharynx and rotate swab. Let swab rest in place for few seconds to absorb secretions. Use one swab for both nostrils places it into Virus Transport Medium (VTM). (Fig 1)

\* **Oropharyngeal swab** – Using thick swab vigorously swab both tonsil areas, oropharynx and place it in VTM. Use a tongue depressor to depress tongue to avoid contamination of swab with saliva (Fig 2).

# **NPA**- preferred in an ICU setting in an acutely ill patient and in infants.

Secretions are aspirated through a catheter connected to a mucus trap & fitted to a vacuum source. The catheter is inserted in to nostril parallel to the palate. The vacuum is applied and the catheter is slowly withdrawn with a rotating manner. After mucus has been collected from both nostrils (Fig 3), the catheter is flushed with 2-3 ml of VTM by inserting catheter tip in to 2-3 commercial VTM tubes (depending on the vol. of the VTM tube) (Fig 4). **Remove the connecting two tubes with the lid** (Fig 5). Remove the bottom fixed cap and close the collecting tube. Place in ice and transport in a container.

**NB for neonate and young infants appropriate feeding tube may be connected to the suction end of the tube**

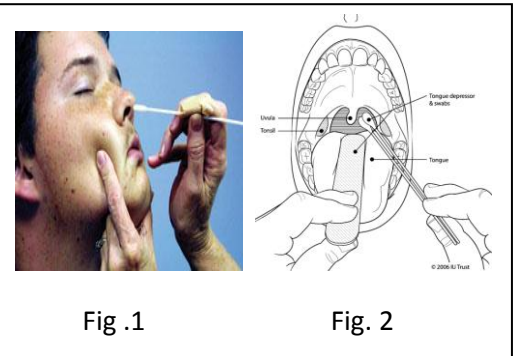


Fig .1

Fig. 2

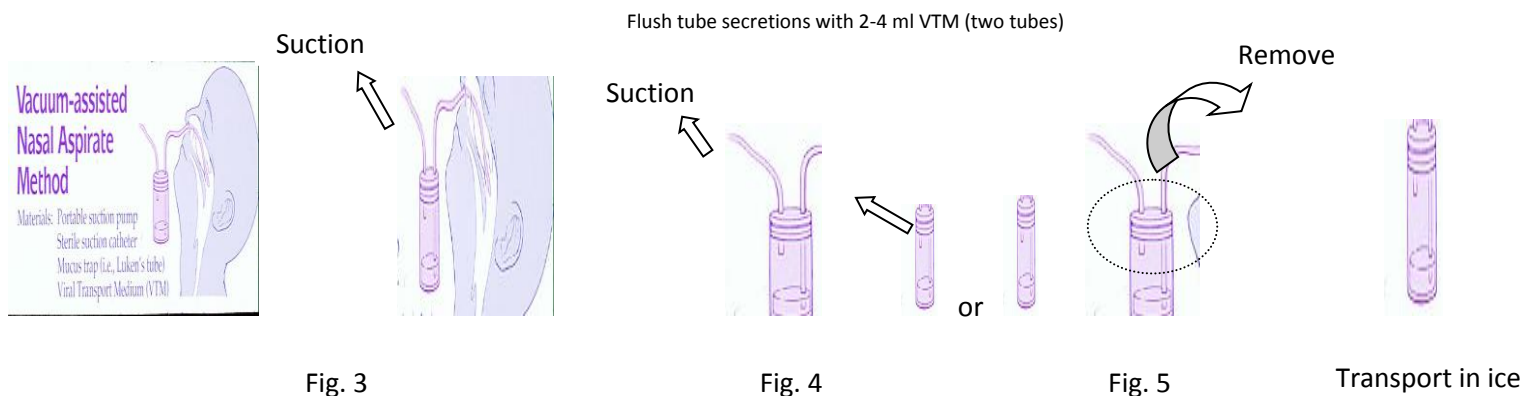


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Transport in ice

\*\* Two autopsy samples (NOT a part of lung) should be sent or Tracheal secretion collected by swabs in VTM or sterile normal saline. If unable for open biopsy, lung tissues may be taken as **Tru-Cut needle biopsy** (through intercostal space).

**DO NOT use formalin or alcohol**

All samples should accompany a request form with a detail history (Available with infection control NO).

Can download from (<http://www.mri.gov.lk/en/assets/Departments/Virology/Influenza-MRI-Request-form-corrected.pdf>)