

Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research  
Microbiological Services  
10 Dana Rd., Valhalla, NY 10595  
Tel: (914) 231-1610  
Fax: (914) 231-1772  
E-mail: microbiology@westchestergov.com  
Monday - Friday  
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday and Holidays  
9 a.m. - 12 noon for TB testing

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING NASOPHARYNGEAL SPECIMENS FOR INFLUENZA

1. Remove the sterile nasopharyngeal swab from its package. Handle the plastic shaft above the molded break point to avoid contaminating specimen. Calcium alginate swabs are unacceptable.
2. Insert the swab so that it curves down into the posterior nasopharynx and hold it there for 15 to 30 seconds or until the patient coughs.
3. Place swab in transport tube, snap off end of swab at the molded break point and replace lid.
4. Label tube with patients name and date of collection. Fill out appropriate laboratory requisition.
5. Place tube inside plastic bag. Place laboratory requisition in sleeve outside of the bag.
6. Refrigerate specimen until testing; specimens for virus culture must be received within 2 days. Specimens for NAA must be received within 4 days.
7. Submit specimen to the Public Health laboratory (at the above address) Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.