



Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

TNSOP - 2

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION, PACKAGING AND TRANSPORT FOR COVID-19

Responsibilities:

- Appropriate clinical sample need to be collected by laboratory personnel/ health care worker trained in specimen collection in presence of a clinician.
- By following all biosafety precautions and using personal protective equipment (PPEs), clinical samples need to be sent to the designated laboratory by following standard triple packaging.

Samples to be collected:

Essential samples: - collect in Viral Transport Media (VTM)

- Throat swab (oropharyngeal swab)
- Nasal swab (Nasopharyngeal swab)

Other preferred samples: - Wide mouth sterile plastic containers

- Bronchoalveolar lavage
- Tracheal aspirate
- Sputum

In lab confirmed patients:

- Blood
- Stool and urine – wide mouth sterile plastic containers

Optimal timing for sample collection:






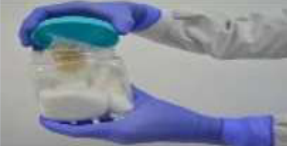


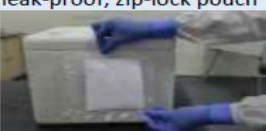


- Within 3 days of symptom onset and no later than 7 days.
- Preferably prior to initiation of antimicrobial chemoprophylaxis or therapy

Sample Collection:

- Use PPE while collecting sample.
- Before collecting the samples, it requires to be ensured that neck is in extended position. Nasopharyngeal swab will be collected with the per nasal swab, after taking out the swab it is passed along the floor of nasal cavity and left there for about five second and transferred into VTM and transported to the designated lab at 4 degree Celsius as soon as possible (same day).
- For collection of samples from throat area the other sterilized swab is swabbed over the tonsillar area and posterior pharyngeal wall and finally transferred into VTM and stored and transported to the designated lab at 4 degree Celsius as soon as possible (same day).
- Other respiratory material like endotracheal aspirated / broncheo-alveolar lavage in patients with more severe respiratory disease can also be collected and transported in the same way.

Specimen labelling and processing:

- Personal protective equipment (apron, hand gloves, face shield, N95 Masks etc.) need to be used and all biosafety precautions should be followed so as to protect individuals and the environment.
- Proper labelling (name/age/gender/specimen ID) need to be done on specimen container and other details of sender (name/address/phone number) on the outer container by mentioning “To be tested for COVID-19”
- For any queries, the 24*7 control room attached to the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Chennai-6 may be approached in the following numbers,
 - 044-29510400
 - 044-29510500
 - 9444340496
 - 8714448477

Procedure for Specimen Packaging and Transport			
<p>1. Use PPE while handling specimen</p> 	<p>2. Seal the neck of the sample vials using parafilm</p> 	<p>3. Cover the sample vials using absorbent material</p> 	<p>4. Arrange primary container (vial) in secondary container</p> 
<p>5. Placing the centrifuge tube inside a zip-lock pouch</p> 	<p>6. Placing the zip-lock pouch inside a sturdy plastic container and seal the neck of the container</p> 	<p>Note: Sample vials can also be placed inside a zip-lock pouch, covered in absorbent material and secured by heat-sealing or rubber bands. Then, the zip-lock pouch should be placed inside another plastic pouch and secured</p>	<p>7. Using a thermocol box as an outer container and placing the secondary container within it, surrounded by hard-frozen gel packs</p> 
<p>7. Using a hard card-board box as an outer container and placing the secondary container and the gel packs</p> 	<p>8. Placing the completed Specimen Referral Form (available on www.niv.co.in) and request letter inside a leak-proof, zip-lock pouch</p> 	<p>9. Securing the zip-lock pouch with the Specimen Referral Form on the outer container</p> 	<p>10. Attaching the labels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senders' address, contact number; Consignee's address /contact number; • Biological substance- Category B; • 'UN 3373'; Orientation label, Handle with care 

Documents to accompany:

- 1) Packaging list/proforma Invoice
- 2) Air way bill (for air transport) (to be prepared by sender or shipper)
- 3) Value equivalence document (for road/rail/sea transport)

[**Note:** 1. A vaccine-carrier/ice-box can also be used as an outer container

2. The minimum dimensions of the outer container should be 10 x 10 x 10 cm (length x width x height)]

Routing of samples:

Clinical specimens, official documents and Specimen request forms for testing of SARS-CoV 2 need to be sent to the designated laboratory.

COVID-19 Testing centres in Tamilnadu (*As on 20.03.2020)

1. King's Institute of Preventive Medicine & Research, Chennai
2. Government Medical College, Theni
3. Tirunelveli Medical College, Tirunelveli
4. Govt. Medical college, Thiruvarur
5. Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital (RGGGH), Chennai.
6. Coimbatore Medical College Hospital, Coimbatore
7. Government Mohan Kumaramangalam Medical College & Hospital, Salem