

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus Specimen Collection and Laboratory Testing Guidance

Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory (SCPHL) was approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to perform testing with the CDC's 2019-nCoV Real-Time RT-PCR Diagnostic Panel under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Under the EUA, testing is authorized only for patients who meet the CDC criteria for 2019-nCoV testing and have been issued a PUI number. Specimens approved for testing under the EUA are: nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swabs, bronchoalveolar lavage, sputum, lower respiratory tract aspirate, nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal aspirate.

### Specimen Collection

#### Upper Respiratory Tract

- **Nasopharyngeal (NP)**: Insert a swab into the nostril parallel to the palate. Leave the swab in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions. Swab both nasopharyngeal areas with the same swab. Place swabs immediately into sterile viral transport media.
- **Oropharyngeal (OP) (e.g., throat swab)**: Swab the posterior pharynx, avoiding the tongue. Place swab immediately into sterile viral transport media. Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts.
- Place both the NP and OP specimens in one tube of viral transport medium.
- Wash or aspirate: Collect 2-3 mL into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container.

#### Lower respiratory

- Bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate: Collect 2-3 mL into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container.
- Sputum: Have the patient rinse the mouth with water and then expectorate deep cough sputum directly into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Do not collect sputum if it must be induced.

**Storage:** Refrigerate at 2-8<sup>0</sup> C.

**Transport:** Transport to SCPHL on cold pack.

**Test Turn-Around Time:** 24 to 72 hours upon arrival at SCPHL, Sacramento.

Contact SCPHL at (916) 874-9231 Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm. After-hours call (916) 875-5881 for Health Officer on Duty.

#### Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory

Anthony Gonzalez – Laboratory Director  
Jean Venture – Supervising PH Microbiologists – BT Coordinator  
Deborah Forester – Sr. PH Microbiologist

4600 Broadway, Ste. 2300  
Sacramento, CA 95820  
Phone: (916) 874-9231  
Fax: (916) 854-8941