

## Instructions for taking samples in RECOVERY

Viral swabs are collected from patients in RECOVERY. These will help us identify which, if any, patients respond to the treatments being tested and will tell us more about the effects these drugs have.

### **Patients in any influenza comparison (*including those allocated usual care*):**

- Baseline nose swab (day 1) plus a follow-up nose swab on day 5.

If patients are discharged before day 5, they should be asked to collect the remaining swab themselves if possible and post them in a post-box. Instructions for how to do this are at [recoverytrial.net/uk/for-site-staff/site-teams](https://recoverytrial.net/uk/for-site-staff/site-teams) under 'RECOVERY self-swabbing instructions'.

New treatments may be introduced, and the sampling plan may change slightly as the trial progresses, so please refer to the webpage above for current information.

### **How and when to take samples**

All samples should be taken using the viral swab kits provided. A stock of these will be held by the local research team, and replenished by the central co-ordinating team when running low. If more supplies are needed e-mail [recoverytrial@ndph.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recoverytrial@ndph.ox.ac.uk).

The baseline nose swab sample should be taken after consent has been given but before randomisation. Sites should make local arrangements for taking these at the weekend. If research staff are unavailable, consider arranging for a ward nurse to take swabs. No training is required to follow these swabbing & postage instructions. If it's not possible to do this, please take swabs as close as possible to the intended sampling time (e.g., Friday afternoon for swabs due on Saturday, or Monday morning for swabs due on Sunday).

If a 'day 5' sample has not been taken by the end of day 5, take this as soon as possible afterwards. Samples do not need labelling with 'd1/ d5', but please ensure collection dates & times are accurately written on each sample box.

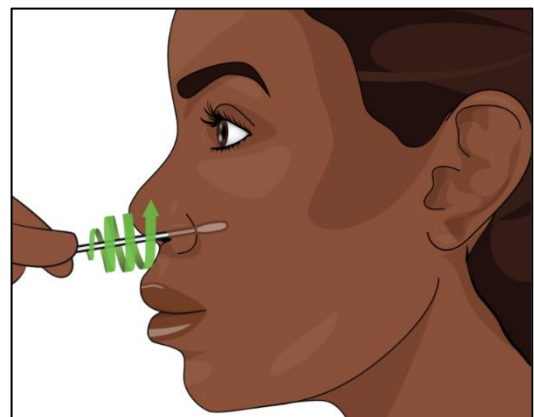
### **Procedure for taking VIRAL SWABS**

The viral swab kit contains everything you need to take the swabs:

- One swab
- A collection tube containing 2ml of viral transport medium
- A larger screw top container which is used to transport the collection tube
- A cardboard box, which is used to transport the screw top container
- A plastic envelope with pre-printed return label, which the box is posted in

It is important that swabbing is done as consistently as possible for each patient so that changes in viral carriage can be detected (ideally by the same person, but this is not essential). Nose swabs here are mid-turbinate swabs, *not* swabs of the anterior nostril as often used in self-swabbing.

- 1) Explain the procedure to the patient.
- 2) Take the swab out of its packet.
- 3) Ask the patient to tilt their head back slightly.
- 4) If the patient is on nasal oxygen, pull the cannula slightly away from the side being swabbed for a few seconds whilst the swab is taken.
- 5) While gently rotating the swab, insert about 2 cm into one nostril pointing directly backwards (not upwards) until resistance is met. Do not use force.
- 6) Rotate the swab five times against nasal wall.
- 7) Repeat in the other nostril using the same swab.
- 8) Place the swab tip first into the collection tube, break off plastic end, and replace lid.



### Labelling and returning swabs

- 1) Patients should be randomised as soon as possible after baseline sample collection, which will create a participant ID. If this is not done straight after collection, keep a temporary identifier with the sample so it does not get mixed up with others before labelling (e.g., write patient details on a piece of paper kept with the sample). Do not write anything on the swab tube or box at this stage.
- 2) As soon as you have a 7-digit participant ID, label the swab tube with this. Do not add any other identifiers.
- 3) Place the swab tube inside the larger screw top tube and close the lid tightly.
- 4) Place the larger tube inside the box and write participant ID and collection date & time on the front of the box in the spaces provided.
- 5) Tick 'Influenza' to indicate which comparison the patient is in
- 6) Place the box in the plastic pre-addressed envelope.
- 7) Put the envelope in the internal hospital post, please **do not** send it to a local clinical lab. At some sites other arrangements may be made for sample postage, which will be explained to those collecting samples. Samples can remain at room temperature if collection is delayed (e.g., over the weekend if there are no Royal Mail collections), but if it is convenient to keep these samples at 4°C whilst awaiting collection this is preferable.