

# Direct-observed, Self-Administered Specimen Collection for COVID-19 Testing

**Direct-observed, self-administered specimen collection for COVID-19 testing:** LabCorp is providing this information regarding recent updates from the FDA and CDC to help with your practice's specimen collection decisions.

On March 25, 2020, the CDC updated guidance regarding specimen collection for COVID-19 testing that included an option for self-administered specimen collection with direct observation by a health care professional. **On May 5, 2020,<sup>1</sup> the CDC also updated guidance that testing can be performed on asymptomatic individuals who are prioritized by health departments or clinicians, and testing should be ordered in compliance with the CDC guidelines for the prioritization of testing.<sup>2</sup>**

The following have been deemed acceptable collection methods<sup>1</sup>:

- Nasopharyngeal (NP) specimen collected by a health care professional, or
- An oropharyngeal (OP) specimen collected by a health care professional, or
- A nasal mid-turbinate (NMT) swab collected by a health care professional or by onsite patient self-collection in the presence and under the supervision of a health care professional, or
- Nasal swab specimen from the anterior nares, collected by a health care professional or by the patient on-site in the presence of a health care professional, or self collection at home (Pixel by LabCorp at-home collection kit granted Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA), or
- Nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal wash/aspirate (NW) specimen collected by a healthcare professional.

**Caution:** Providers sending specimens for testing should be aware of the possible increased risk for false-negative SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid amplification results due to improper collection and/or collection site.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). CDC web site. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>. Published May 5, 2020. Accessed May 11, 2020.

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). CDC web site. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>. Published May 3, 2020. Accessed May 11, 2020.



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