

Coronavirus (nCoV 2019 or COVID-19) Testing at the AR-PHL

Please follow the steps below for assurance of proper collection and transportation of specimens for Coronavirus testing:

1. Prior to collection of specimens for possible Coronavirus testing, approval must be obtained by calling the Outbreak Response number at **501-537-8969 or 1-800 554-5738 (after hours and on weekends)**.
2. Once approval has been given by the ADH Outbreak Response, collect two Nasopharyngeal swabs (NP) and one Oropharyngeal swab (OP). Place swabs in a single vial with **2-3 ml of Viral Transport Media**.
 - a. Nasopharyngeal swab AND oropharyngeal swab (NP/OP swab)
 - i. Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media. **One NP swab and OP swab can be placed in the same viral transport media collection kit. If the collection kit contains both NP and OP swabs, the collection kit must be labeled as NP/OP.** Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C and ship on ice pack. Please do not use foam tipped swabs or swabs placed in culture media.
3. Label each of the specimens with two identifiers (name and date of birth) AND indicate the type of specimen, i.e. OP or NP.
4. Complete an HL-06 form (call QA to get the form) and PUI CDC form (see link below) and place in the box with the specimens. **Do not place the paperwork in the bag with the specimens.**
5. Include a completed PUI CDC form. (This form is on the AR-PHL's website) you can find by going to: <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/pui-form.pdf>
6. Ship as a category B specimen (with both forms) to:
Arkansas Dept. of Health-Public Health Laboratory
201 S. Monroe
Little Rock, Ar. 72205

OR

Package as a category B specimen and bring to the nearest local health unit for shipment. Write "Molecular" on the outside of the box. **LHUs cannot accept unpackaged specimens.**
7. Turnaround time is a maximum of 7 days. **Expect results within 48-72 hours.**
 - a. nCoV 2019 results will be released to ADH Outbreak Response/Epidemiology
 - i. Outbreak Response will disseminate information to submitters
 - b. RP results will be released to the requestor and the submitter (if appropriate fax no. is provided.)

NOTE: This is a fluid situation and information is being updated as requirements change. To verify the most current information, call Outbreak Response (number above), the AR-PHL QA Office (501-661-2363, 501-671-1490, 501-280-4038), the Safety Office (501-614-5357), or the Molecular Supervisor (501-661-2454).