

# Aculabs Protocol for Specimen Collection Shortages in wake of COVID-19 Outbreak.



## MAY 1, 2020 UPDATE:

### NEW COVID-19 TRANSPORT MEDIA:

Aculabs is now allowing facilities to send COVID-19 specimen in new saline transport media. **Clients will be supplied with either type of media based on supply.**



IMAGE 1: White-cap saline transport media comes with shorter swabs.

IMAGE 2: Black-cap BD BBL saline transport media comes with MRC swabs.



IMAGE 3: Purple UTM RT swab

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Cases of those infected with the virus and developing the disease have occurred around the world, including the U.S., with a public health emergency being declared in America and worldwide.

Due to an expected surge in requested testing for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, Aculabs foresees an upcoming shortage in different specimen collection media and containers, and recommends the below guidelines on which specimen collection media to use.

*Please ensure that each respiratory sample is placed within its own unique specimen bag.*

### NEW: MAY 1, 2020 -

- **COVID-19** [#3991] is collected with a saline transport media<sup>1</sup> or<sup>2</sup> as a nasopharyngeal swab;

*Please be aware that respiratory specimen **cannot** be sent on ice, ice packs, or anything that can melt within the specimen bag.*

- **Resp. Pathogen Profile** [#9650] & **RVP by PCR** [#9558] is collected with a purple UTM-RT swab<sup>3</sup> as a oropharyngeal *or* nasopharyngeal swab;

*Please be aware that tests “#9558 RVP by PCR” & “#9650 Resp. Pathogen Profile” **do not** include the test “#3991 COVID-19”.*

- **Influenza A&B, Rapid Screen** [#729F] should be collected by using a blue BactiSwab<sup>4</sup>.

- **Influenza A&B, Molecular** [#729M] should be collected with a red viral transport swab<sup>5</sup>. *No other media may be used for this test.*

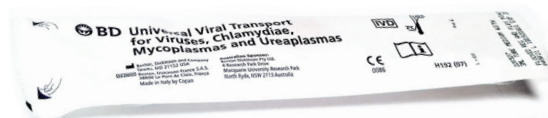
*Note 1: The UTM-RT swabs are most often used as oropharyngeal swabs, but can be used as an accepted alternative for a nasopharyngeal swab, though the UTM-RT swab is slightly bigger than many nasopharyngeal swabs.*

*Note 2: While the red viral transport swab is acceptable for Influenza A&B Rapid Screen, we advise facilities to preserve all red viral swabs for the Influenza A&B Molecular which cannot be done with any other media.*

IMAGE 4: BactiSwab



IMAGE 5: Red Viral Transport Swab





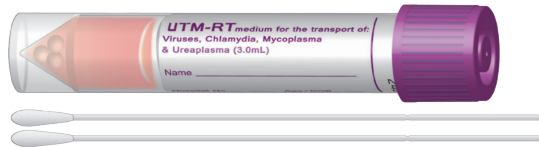
# Specimen Collection and Shipping Instructions

Please contact your Customer Service Representative if you have any questions.

## Purple UTM-RT Swab

**Use For:**  
#3991 COVID-19\*  
#9558 RVP by PCR  
#9650 Resp. Pathogen Profile

1. Prepare the appropriate swab, specimen label, and biohazard bag so all supplies are on-hand.
2. Open package and remove swab, ensuring tip of the swab does not touch any surface. Do not lay swab down.
- 3a. **If using as throat swab**, gently insert swab into back of the throat or tonsillar area. Avoid touching tongue, teeth, and gums. Rub swab over the tonsillar pillars and the posterior oropharynx for 10-15 seconds.
- 3b. **If using as nasal swab**, gently insert into nostril (resistance will be felt) until nasopharynx is reached, rotating over posterior nasopharynx for 10-15 seconds.
4. Place swab into UTM and break (snap) off at the indicator line on swab. Replace cap and screw on securely.
5. Label sample and place in biohazard bag.
6. After collection, ensure that proper requisition or Online Order Entry form is completely filled out so technician may collect it with no issue.
7. To avoid delays in turnaround time, please submit separate specimens for each test requested.



## Blue BactiSwab

**Use For:**  
#729F Influenza A&B, Rapid Screen

1. Prepare the appropriate swab, specimen label, and biohazard bag so all supplies are on-hand.
2. Have the patient blow his or her nose to remove excess mucous and tilt their head back.
3. Insert swab into one nostril all the way to the nasopharynx (resistance will be felt).
4. Once the nasopharynx is reached, rotate the swab over the surface of the posterior nasopharynx for 10-15 seconds.
5. Withdraw swab from collection site; insert into transport tube and break swab at *instructed midpoint*.
6. After collection, ensure that proper requisition or Online Order Entry form is completely filled out so technician may collect it with no issue.

## Red Viral Transport

**Use For:**  
#3991 COVID-19\*, #9558 RVP by PCR\*  
#9650 Resp. Pathogen Profile\*  
#729M Influenza A&B, Molecular

1. Prepare the appropriate swab, specimen label, and biohazard bag so all supplies are on-hand.
2. Have the patient blow his or her nose to remove excess mucous and tilt their head back.
3. Insert swab into one nostril all the way to the nasopharynx (resistance will be felt).
4. Once the nasopharynx is reached, rotate the swab over the surface of the posterior nasopharynx for 10-15 seconds.
5. Withdraw swab from collection site; insert into transport tube and break swab at *the score mark*.
6. After collection, ensure that proper requisition or Online Order Entry form is completely filled out so technician may collect it with no issue.

**NEW: MAY 1, 2020 -**

## Saline Transport Media

**Use For:**  
#3991 COVID-19

1. Prepare the appropriate swab, specimen label, and biohazard bag so all supplies are on-hand.
2. Have the patient blow his or her nose to remove excess mucous and tilt their head back.
3. **Use swab included with tube.** Insert swab into one nostril to the nasopharynx (resistance will be felt).
4. Once the nasopharynx is reached, rotate swab over the surface of the posterior nasopharynx for 10-15 seconds.
5. Withdraw swab from collection site; insert into transport tube and, if marked, break swab at *the score mark*.
6. After collection, ensure that proper requisition or Online Order Entry form is completely filled out so technician may collect it with no issue. *Ensure specimen is not frozen. Specimens in saline transport media should be sent room temperature or refrigerated.*

**\*NOTICE:** The red viral transport swab is acceptable for #3991 COVID-19, #9558 RVP by PCR, and #9650 Resp. Pathogen Profile testing. During supply shortages, Aculabs has previously had to encourage facilities to save such swabs for their "Influenza A&B, Molecular" orders, which can only be performed with the red viral transport swab, and may make such suggestions in the future. Due to the supply currently on-hand as of **April 1st, 2020**, Aculabs advises that the purple UTM-RT swab and red viral transport swab are **both acceptable** for respiratory testing and can be used interchangeably. Please visit [www.aculabs.com](http://www.aculabs.com) for any changes.

**IMPORTANT:** ALL RESPIRATORY SPECIMEN SHOULD BE PLACED (AS OF 05/01/20) IN PURPLE, BLUE OR GREEN BIOHAZARD BAGS AND STORED AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.

\*PLEASE CHECK EXPIRATION DATE ON ALL SWABS & MEDIA BEFORE SUBMITTING AS SPECIMEN\*

\*\*BOTH BAG AND SWAB MUST BE APPROPRIATELY LABELED TO BE ACCEPTED. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DOUBLE BAG SPECIMEN\*\*