

How to carry out a nasal swab test on a child

This information sheet explains how to carry out a nasal swab test on a child. It is important to follow these instructions to make sure the test is completed correctly.

Contents of the kit

In the nasal swab test kit, you will find the following:

- Paper form with information details about your child
- How to carry out a nasal swab test leaflet
- Patient letter asking you to take the test
- White return envelope labelled UN3373 with a return address label attached and a pre-paid postage sticker
- Swab stick
- White absorbent material sheet
- Plastic transport case for swab
- Blue and clear plastic bag marked 'Safety bag'

Before you start

- Allow about 20 minutes to carry out the nasal swab test.
- It is important that you post the nasal swab back to us on the day you carry out the test, so make sure you have enough time to go to your local post box before you start the test.

Taking a nasal swab

1. Wash yours and your child's hands for at least 20 seconds before and after carrying out the nasal swab test.
2. You will see a cotton-tipped nasal swab stick and a plastic tube inside the test kit (see Picture 1 on the next page). Undo the white top of the plastic tube and set the top to one side (you will no longer need this white top).
3. It is important your child does not touch the nasal swab. If you have a young child aged up to 5-years-old, we recommend sitting him/her on another person's lap. Ask the person to cuddle your child firmly (Picture 2 on the next page) while you carry out the nasal swab test.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

4. Older children may be able to do carry out their own nasal swab test with your guidance. You can give your child a small mirror to help him/her see what they are doing.
5. Ask or help your child to tilt his/her head back a little.
6. Use the cotton-tipped end of the swab to take samples from each nostril in turn. Insert the swab into the first nostril (Picture 3). Rotate (turn) the swab against the inside of the nostril for three seconds moving it around in 10 circles so that the swab touches the walls of the nostril. Now use the swab to repeat the same actions on the other nostril.
7. Once you have taken the swab, put the swab stick inside the tube. Press the top of the swab down firmly to make sure it is sealed inside the tube.
8. Wrap the white absorbent material (Picture 4) around the tube and place the wrapped tube into the transport plastic case, also called a blister pack (Picture 5).



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6

9. Place the whole thing into the plastic safety bag (picture 6) and seal it.

Packing your sample

10. You will find a paper form in your test kit with information details about your child and the test. Write the date and time the nasal swab sample was taken clearly on the form.

11. Place this form and the plastic safety bag containing the swab stick into the return envelope (marked UN3373), see Picture 7. Seal the bag.



Picture 7

Record your sample

12. Type the following link into a web browser <http://bit.do/RBHT-HomeTest>

Or you can scan this QR code on your phone which will open the web form:



13. Complete the online form that appears on the screen to confirm that you have posted the nasal swab sample.

Post your sample

14. Remember to post the sample back to us on the day you carry out the test. The return envelope should have a postage paid sticker and a label with the address of our laboratories stuck to it. Please check the return envelope has both stickers before you post it. The envelope can be posted into your nearest post box.
15. Dispose of all the other test kit equipment safely in your household bin.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns about taking this nasal swab test, please speak to the staff caring for you or contact our home testing team:

Home Testing team

Royal Brompton Hospital

Tel: 020 7352 8121 Ext 88401 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

Harefield Hospital

Tel: 0330 128 5086 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

More information

See more information on the Home Testing page on Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals' website (www.rbht.nhs.uk).

If you need help or advice about any service or department at our hospitals, and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 020 7349 7715 or email pals@rbht.nhs.uk. This is a confidential service.

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