

Covid-19 Testing

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a nares swab?

A nares swab is a procedure used to check if someone is infected with coronavirus. It is done using a thin swab (like a Q-tip) placed into the nostril to collect some of the mucus there. The swab stays in the nostril area and is gently swirled for 10 to 15 seconds. This procedure is repeated in the other nostril. After both nostrils have been swabbed, the swab is placed in a collection tube and sent to the lab for testing.



What is an NP swab?

A nasopharyngeal (NP) swab is a procedure used to check if someone is infected with coronavirus. It is done using a long, thin swab (like a long Q-tip) placed into the nose to collect some of the fluid there. The swab reaches back where the nose and throat connect and is gently swirled for 10 to 15 seconds. The nurse will then place the swab into a collection tube and send it to the lab for testing.



Why does the hospital use NP and Nares swabs for testing?

The hospital offers both NP and nares swab testing because our medical experts believe they are an accurate and reliable way of collecting samples for COVID-19 testing. CHLA does **not** offer "Rapid COVID testing".

How should I prepare my child on what to expect?

The NP swab and Nares swab tests each feel different. The nares swab may tickle a bit or cause a little discomfort. The NP swab may cause a bit of a sting or burning feeling in the nose while the swab is inside. Some people say the NP swab test feels like "water in your nose when you're swimming." It is uncomfortable, but it does not last long. Please do not tell your child that "it won't hurt" as some discomfort is expected during this procedure. Please also be aware that we do not allow filming during any part of the procedure.

Is blood on the collection swab, or a bloody nose normal?

Sometimes blood gets on the tip of the swab. This can happen if the nose is dry or if the child moves around a lot during the swabbing process. The area inside the nose has very small blood vessels that can bleed easily when touched. If a nosebleed happens, please pinch your child's nose and let the nurse know. We will give you the supplies you need until the bleeding stops.

Patient Family Education

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How can I help my child during the procedure?

For safety reasons, your child must not move around during the procedure. If your child is moving and unable to hold still, we may ask you to help hold them. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping everyone safe.

How long will the test take?

The nose swab will take 10 to 15 seconds, but you may also be asked to wait in line. The amount of time you will spend waiting depends on the how many people are also waiting to be swabbed. If your child is on oxygen or requires a ventilator, please let the security guard at the front of the clinic know and we can make sure your child is seen as soon as possible. We also recommend that you bring extra equipment in case you have a long wait.

How long does it take to get test results, and how will I get my results?

The doctor who ordered the test for your child will get the results within 24 hours. If the results are positive, someone on the medical team will call you. However, you may or may not be called if the results are negative.

To check for the results yourself, you will need to use CHLA's online health information system called MyChildren'sLA Patient Portal. The nurse will give you instructions on how to sign up after the NP swab test.

- If you are already signed up to use the portal, results should post 24 to 48 hours after the test.
 - If you need the test results to travel, please contact the airline for further guidance.
- If you have not signed up to use the portal, it may take up to 5 to 7 days to be able to log in.

Who should I call if I need help with the MyChildren'sLA Patient Portal?

For help signing up for the Patient Portal, call the Family Resource Center (323) 361-7698	For technical help with the Patient Portal, e-mail: PatientPortal@chla.usc.edu
For questions about test results, please contact your child's medical team. ***Please do not contact these locations (PatientPortal@chla.usc.edu) or the Family Resource Center for test results.	