

## **6.5 Specimen collection and storage**

A Nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swab should be collected using Dacron or polyester flocked swabs. It should be transported to the laboratory at a temperature of 4°C and stored in the laboratory between 4 and -70°C on the basis of the number of days and, in order to increase the viral load, both nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swabs should be placed in the same tube. Bronchoalveolar lavage and nasopharyngeal aspirate should be collected in a sterile container and transported similarly to the laboratory by maintaining a temperature of 4°C.

Sputum samples, especially from the lower respiratory tract, should be collected with the help of a sterile container and stored, whereas tissue from a biopsy or autopsy should be collected using a sterile container along with saline. However, both should be stored in the laboratory at a temperature that ranges between 4 and -70°C. Whole blood for detecting the antigen, particularly in the first week of illness, should be collected in a collecting tube and stored in the laboratory between 4 and -70°C. Urine samples must also be collected using a sterile container and stored