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### Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do

#### Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

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Public Health  
England

Guidance

## COVID-19: which samples should be taken (text version of poster)

Updated 3 April 2020

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## 1. Scope

This guidance explains and supplements the information presented visually in the poster [COVID-19: which samples should be taken](#).

## 2. Specimens

Upper respiratory tract sample options:

- combined nose and throat swab in one collection tube containing universal transport medium OR
- single swab used for throat then nose OR
- individual nose and throat swabs in separate collection tubes OR
- nasopharyngeal aspirate in a universal transport pot

Lower respiratory tract sample in universal container (sputum) if obtainable

If the patient is admitted, take a sample for acute serology:

- 5mL in either serum tube or plain (no additive) tube. For children <12 years, 1mL is acceptable

### 3. Packaging

For packaging guidance, see poster [Suspected COVID-19 cases: sampling and packaging poster](#).

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