

## **GUIDE TO DOING COVID-19 ANTIGEN RAPID TEST (ART) IN CHILDREN**

### **Process :**

- There are two ways of doing COVID-19 ART swabbing for children – self-administered +/- supervision or care-provider-administered
- For both methods, explain to the child / if needed demonstrate to the child what will be done
- Show video to child on handphone or iPad – (can show KKH videos : 2 videos, 1 showing assisted swabbing & another self-swabbing)

#### **a) Self-Administered ART Swabbing For Children –**

- If child is more than 7 years of age – can consider self-administered ART swabbing +/- unsupervised

#### **b) Care-provider-administered ART Swabbing For Children -**

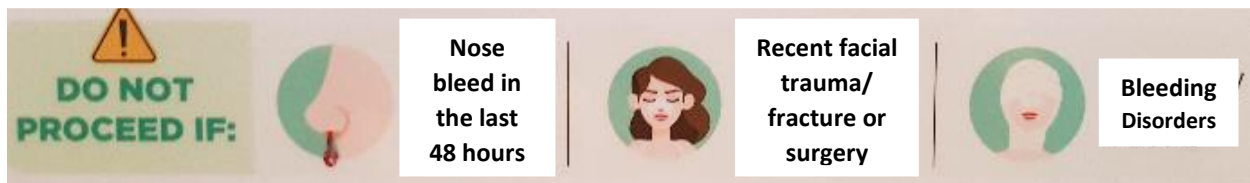
- Position the child in a comfortable posture – no need to lie down
- Use age-appropriate distraction techniques if needed
- Position the child so that the child can see it when the swab is being done
- If the child sitting up, tilt the head up so that the swab can be gently introduced into the nostrils
- Hold swab with a pencil grip and insert gently along passage of nostril or until resistance is met.
- Rotate swab 5 times against the nasal wall & follow same method for other nostril
- Do NOT force the swab into the nostril - if child is very uncomfortable, immediately stop & withdraw

### **Suggested Message to Child :**

- I am going to swab & check you for COVID-19.
- I will swab your both sides of your nose using this swab (show the swab and indicate the swab is NOT sharp or pokey).
- This will take about 5 seconds each side of your nose → Can count to 5 or count backwards from 10 with the child or sing a brief ditty with the child - eg Baby Shark, Baby Shark
- You may be uncomfortable or have tearing during this.
- If you feel pain while I am swabbing, please tell me immediately & I will stop

## Contraindications

- Bleeding disorders – eg child with low platelets
- Recent facial trauma/fracture / surgery involving the face or nose
- Chronic mucositis with frequent epistaxis (nose bleeds) or recent nose bleed in the last 48 hours. These children must be swabbed with extra special care
- NB : For children with VMR/allergic rhinitis while not an absolute contraindication, these children must be swabbed with extra gentle care)
- Children at risk of upper airway obstruction- eg croup, children with stridor/noisy breathing



## References :

1. COVID-19 swabbing. [https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline\\_index/COVID-19\\_swabbing/](https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline_index/COVID-19_swabbing/) (Accessed 1 Sept 2021)
2. Distraction techniques for COVID-19 swabbing. [https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline\\_index/Distraction\\_techniques\\_for\\_COVID-19\\_swabbing/](https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline_index/Distraction_techniques_for_COVID-19_swabbing/) (Accessed 1 Sept 2021)
3. Birnie K, McMurtry M. 6 tips to prepare your child for easy COVID-19 testing. <https://theconversation.com/6-tips-to-prepare-your-child-for-easy-covid-19-testing-147415> (Accessed 1 Sept 2021)

## **APPENDIX :**

### **Distraction techniques for COVID-19 swabbing**

Strategies to support more comfortable COVID swabs vary with age

#### **Infants and toddlers**

- May benefit from comfort positioning
- Can be seated on a parent's lap, facing the person taking the swab
- Demonstration on parents is generally not useful at this age

#### **Pre-schoolers**

- May find it helpful to see the swab being " demonstrated " on a toy or a parent, so they are familiar with the equipment and process

#### **Children aged five and above**

- May find it helpful watching a video of another child having a swab (peer led modelling)
- Visual schedule -A tool to help prepare children by providing a visual reference for each step
  - Helpful for children in general and those with neurodevelopment disability
  - Best used in combination with developmentally appropriate language and comfort positioning
- Should be positioned so that the child can see it when the swab is being done
- The child and caregiver can be encouraged to count to 10 at each point of the swab
- Specific narrative distraction techniques - helpful for children who need repeat swabs and have anticipatory anxiety
  - This technique engages the child's imagination which is both distracting and empowering. The child takes turns to 'turn off' the back of the mouth and the nostrils when the swab is done and to 'turn them back on' when it is finished
- After engaging the child, introduce the idea of turning things on and off by talking about the light switch in their bedroom or the remote-control button that wakes up the TV. Introduce the idea that when things are 'off' they are fast asleep and not bothered by anything
  - Children will often find 'buttons' or 'switches' on themselves or inside their mind, or even on a toy

Ref : [https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline\\_index/Distraction\\_techniques\\_for\\_COVID-19\\_swabbing/](https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline_index/Distraction_techniques_for_COVID-19_swabbing/) (Accessed 1 Sept 2021)