

C&W Respiratory Virus Testing Update, April 2021

Dear colleagues,

There have been subtle changes to the respiratory testing workflows at the C&W Microbiology Laboratory, and we have updated our recommendations. At this time there is no Influenza or RSV circulating, but when they appear, these guidelines will change.

Respiratory Viral Test Menu

Clinical Situation:	Specimen:	Test to order:	Turnaround time:
Children or women with acute respiratory infection or symptoms compatible with COVID-19 who are admitted or require admission, or are immunocompromised	Nasopharyngeal flocced swab (NPFS)	Respiratory NAT Panel (includes COVID, influenza A&B, RSV, Pertussis, many others)	< 2 hr if received 8 am – 10 pm If required urgently outside of these hours, please page the microbiologist on call.
Non-admitted patients with milder symptoms	Saline gargle or NPFS	COVID	< 24 hr.
Exceptional situations requiring urgent COVID results ¹	Saline gargle or NPFS	Urgent COVID ¹	< 2 hr. Page the microbiologist on call to coordinate testing. ²

1. Limited numbers of the urgent COVID tests are available. Please attempt to use the routine COVID test (or a respiratory NAT panel) whenever possible. Occasionally there are complex and urgent situations requiring a quick result when the routine test or panel is not suitable, and/or an NPFS cannot be collected.
2. For urgent test requests, please page the microbiologist on call via switchboard, even during lab hours, to ensure that we intercept the sample and put it on the rapid instrument. COVID tests without notification will be tested routinely (within 24hrs).

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