The Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1    | • Assemble all supplies such as PPE, transport medium, and flocked swab.  
      o Age 12 months – 8 years use the shorter swab (Copan FLOQ swab, HGT038) if available  
      o Age > 8 years and adults use the longer swab (Copan FLOQ, H268D) if available  
        - Where the smaller size is not available, a larger swab may be used but due to the size there will be increased discomfort  
      • Prior to any sampling, the collector should perform hand hygiene and don personal protective equipment including gown, gloves, eye shield and surgical or procedure mask  

|      | 2 • Explain the procedure to patient and/or parent/legal guardian  
      | • Obtain consent to perform the swab from the patient or parent/legal guardian ([Refer to Pediatric Guidance](#))  
|      | 3 • Have the patient blow their nose or remove any mucous with a tissue or cotton tipped swab  
|      | 4 • Have the patient tilt their head back slightly encourage them to close their eyes  
|      | **Refer to Appendix A: Pediatric Considerations for Nasopharyngeal Swab Collection** for pediatric techniques  
|      | 5 • Measure the distance from the corner of the nose to the front of the ear.  
|      |   o Insert ONLY half this length, approximately 4 cm in young children and 7 cm in older children or adults  
|      | 6 • Insert the swab along the nasal septum at a slightly downward angle, following parallel to the palate until resistance is felt against the posterior nasopharynx.  
|      |   **Caution!** Use caution related to pre-breaking with an increased risk for dislodgement in patient  
|      | 7 • Rotate the swab in this spot for **several seconds, not to exceed 10-15 seconds**  
|      | 8 • Remove the swab, cut, and place in sample container ensuring the lid is securely closed  
|      | 9 • Remove PPE per protocol |
Protocol Algorithm for Swabbing – 7 Steps

Before you Start!
Assemble all supplies such as PPE, transport medium, and flocked swab
Prior to any sampling, the collector should perform hand hygiene and don personal protective equipment including gown, gloves, eye shield and surgical or procedure mask

Step 1: Have the patient blow their nose or remove any mucous with a tissue or cotton tipped swab

Step 2: Measure the distance from the corner of the nose to the front of the ear, and insert the shaft ONLY half this length

Caution!
Insertion of approximately 4 cm in young children and 7 cm in adults

Step 3: Have the patient tilt their head back slightly and close their eyes

Step 4: Insert the swab along the nasal septum at a slightly downward angle, following parallel to the palate until resistance is felt against the posterior nasopharynx

Step 5: Rotate the swab in this spot for 10-15 seconds

Step 6: Remove the swab, cut, and place in viral medium container, ensuring the lid is securely closed

Step 7: Remove PPE per protocol
Appendix A:
Pediatric Considerations for Nasopharyngeal Swab Collection

• Take the time to put the child at ease prior to specimen collection. Approach in a calm and friendly manner and explain the procedure in a simple way

  Example:
  “We are going to put this little swab in your nose, it’s going to tickle a lot and be over really quickly!”
  “It may feel like getting water up or nose or like when you drink a really fizzy drink.”
  “It may feel like you have to sneeze for a while after.”
  “By the time you count to 10 slowly, it will all be over.”
  “An adult may help you stay still.”

• Involving the parents in the patient’s care is one of our best tools for cooperation. Getting the parents to assist with holds can help make them feel more in control of the situation which allows the child to feel more comfortable.

For Younger Children
• Younger children may sit on their parent/legal guardian’s lap or in a car seat. Have the adult help tilt the patient’s head back with one arm and to hold the patient still with the other arm.
  o The first and best hold to use is the Two Person Hold for nasal swabs, depicted below.
  o In this hold, the parent is able to provide a hug hold, and the patient’s arms and head are controlled.

Two Person Hold for Nasal Swabs

Photo courtesy of Marshfield Children’s Hospital

  o The second option is Bundling
  o While we do not recommend “bundling” children as it can make them feel vulnerable, there are times when a modified or half bundle is appropriate (e.g. older and stronger uncooperative children). Gowns should be available and can be used.

For Primary School Age Children
• Primary School age children may lean back in the seat and tilt their head back with chin out. If needed parent/guardian may sit beside the child, helping to hold their head.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-Appropriate Comfort Methods</th>
<th>Cuddle</th>
<th>Rubbing or Patting</th>
<th>Soother or Breast feeding</th>
<th>Music or Distraction</th>
<th>Hand Holding or Squeezing</th>
<th>Age Appropriate Play</th>
<th>Bandaids or Artwork or Stickers</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Self Talk or Relaxation Exercises</th>
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<tr>
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