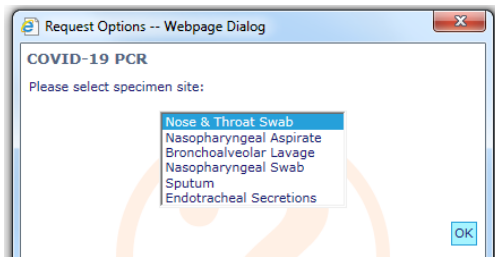


Pathology standards for confirmed and ?COVID-19 samples

All samples from infected patients can potentially contain the coronavirus (COVID-19) and need to be handled in the laboratory in such a way as to minimise the risk of infection for laboratory staff. **It is therefore vital that all samples are labelled and packaged correctly to assist lab staff in identifying high risk samples.**

Labelling COVID-19 PCR samples

Please ensure correct specimen type is selected on ICE e.g. nose & throat, sputum, BAL etc...



All confirmed and ?COVID-19 samples must have the high risk sample box ticked on ICE.



Both confirmed and ?COVID-19 samples and forms must be labelled with yellow 'danger of infection' stickers.

Labelling blood, urine samples etc for other tests

Please ensure you select the correct COVID-19 status of the patient when requesting U+E, FBC, procalcitonin, blood culture etc...and Danger of Infection stickers used, as above.

Danger of Infection labels can be obtained from the print unit-Code WRN502 or from Pathology Supplies (email leedsth-tr.pathologysupplies@nhs.net).

Packaging samples

All confirmed and ?COVID-19 samples are **double-bagged** as there is a risk that the samples could leak during transport to the lab. This is an important health and safety issue to protect staff.

Transporting samples

Samples that must be **walked/ transported** to the lab: (Not sent by POD / airtube)

- Nose & throat swabs
- MRSA screens
- Any swab for bacterial culture
- Faeces
- Urine
- Sputum
- Bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL)
- Nasopharyngeal aspirate (NPA)






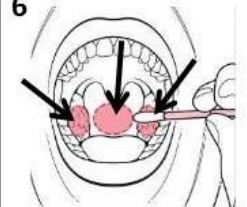


Samples that can be sent by POD (airtube):

- Any blood sample e.g. FBC, U+E, LFT etc..
- Blood cultures


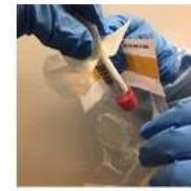




*****REMEMBER: ALL SAMPLES MUST HAVE A DANGER OF INFECTION STICKER AND BE DOUBLE-BAGGED, ONE request label per bag and only listed samples in that bag *****

Sampling, packaging, and transporting COVID-19 nose & throat samples

SAMPLING

<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> 	<p>4</p> 
<p>Ensure you have the correct Copan eSwab.</p>	<p>Pre-label the swab with the ICE request label and danger of infection sticker.</p>	<p>Wash your hands either using soap and water or alcohol gel.</p>	<p>Put on the correct PPE.</p>
<p>5</p> 	<p>6</p> 	<p>7</p> 	<p>8</p> 
<p>Confirm the patient details match your pre-labelled swab.</p> <p>Ask the patient to clear any nasal discharge.</p>	<p>Swab the posterior pharynx, left and right tonsillar area as highlighted in pink. Avoid the tongue area.</p>	<p>Using the same swab. Insert approximately 2cm into the nostril or until resistance is felt. Rotate several times around the nasal wall. Repeat process in the other nostril.</p>	<p>Place the swab into the liquid, do not discard the liquid.</p> <p>Break the swab at the point marked on the swab and screw on the lid.</p>

PACKAGING AND TRANSPORTING

<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> 
<p>Ensure the lid is screwed on tight. Clean the sample with a ChloroPrep.</p>	<p>Put the sample into a sample bag and seal the bag closed.</p>	<p>Roll the sample in the specimen bag.</p>
<p>4</p> 	<p>5</p> 	<p>6</p> 
<p>Place the bagged sample into the labelled specimen bag and seal.</p>	<p>The sample is now doubled bagged.</p> <p>There should be danger of infection stickers on the sample and the form.</p>	<p>The sample should be walked to the lab for processing.</p> <p>Do not send multiple requests in one bag as this may delay testing.</p>

Note:

- Nose & throat swabs are preferred for COVID testing,
- If samples cannot be sent immediately they should be refrigerated
- Sputum samples/ BAL/ NPA or BAL are sent in a sterile universal container