Nasopharyngeal Collection Procedure

General Information: Obtain nasopharyngeal specimen by nasopharyngeal swab. 
Note: Viruses are intracellular, so nasopharyngeal swab must contain an adequate number of cells for optimal results.

Supplies Needed:

- VTM (viral transport media) tube - obtain from Microbiology
- Mask, eye protection, and gloves
- Container of ice (not necessary if specimen is sent to laboratory immediately)
- Flocked nasopharyngeal swab
- Laboratory request form (properly labeled with patient identification label)

Procedure:

1. Apply mask, eye protection, and gloves.
2. Open VTM tube if obtaining viral specimen except for rapid influenza test.
3. Open flocked nasopharyngeal swab package, leaving paper covering on handle end to maintain sterility.
4. Insert swab into the nostril straight to the back of the throat—not upwards. See diagram below for proper insertion of swab. Rub gently to obtain nasopharyngeal cells and secretions.

5. Remove swab and immediately place in VTM tube. Break off excess swab handle to fit into VTM tube.
6. Label VTM tube (according to Bronson’s specimen labeling standard), and **immediately send to the laboratory** via pneumatic tube system.
   
   **Note:** If specimen transportation is delayed, place specimen on ice.

To view a nasopharyngeal specimen collection video, follow link below:

**Note:** Once you click on the link, you will be directed away from the Bronson Test Catalog website. Please use the “Back” button to return to our website.