

UNDER OUR SCOPE



'Can Psych Techs perform a Nasopharyngeal Swab test?'



Due to the recent pandemic and the increasing need to test patients for the Novel Coronavirus, the question of whether California Psychiatric Technicians can perform a nasopharyngeal swab test has come up, and many Psych Techs are not clear whether administering this test falls within our Scope of Practice. This question is especially important for our CAPT Brothers and Sisters working inside the prisons where there are, as of today, within CIM, CMC, LAC, CIW, and CEN, 429 combined confirmed, active coronavirus cases.

CAPT Consultant Ann Lyles, a licensed Psych Tech, recently reached out to the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians for clarification on this Scope-of-Practice question. The BVNPT responded, saying Ann was correct. "If properly trained, with an MD specific order, the PT can perform nasopharyngeal swabbing for testing."

If you are ordered by a medical doctor to administer a nasopharyngeal swab test on a patient suspected of carrying the coronavirus, you may do so provided that you have received the proper training. If unsure of your training or ability, request the instruction. Do not refuse to administer the test because it does not fall within your scope of practice. Doing so may subject you to disciplinary action.

Provided on the right is a partial preview of the nasopharyngeal swab test procedure followed by a diagram provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

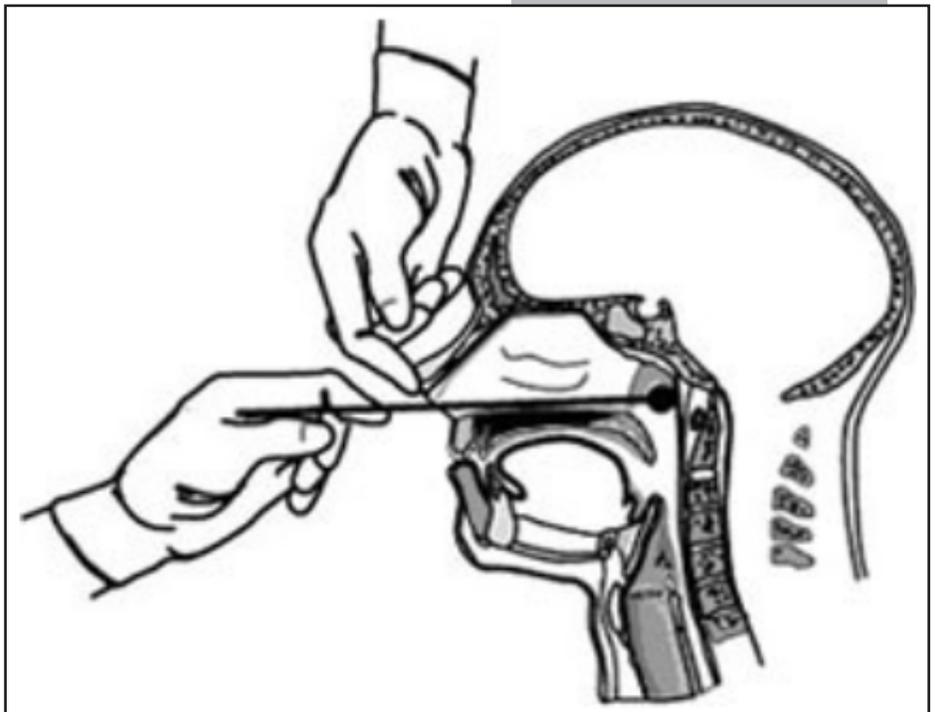
For questions on Psychiatric Technician scope-of-practice issues, contact the BVNPT's scope of practice office via email at bnpt.sop@dca.ca.gov or contact CAPT Headquarters at (800) 677-2278.

□ Tilt the patient's head back slightly (about 70 degrees) to straighten the passage from the front of the nose to the nasopharynx. Instruct the patient to close his or her eyes, then gently insert the swab along the nasal septum until resistance is felt.

□ Rotate the swab several times for 10-15 sec to collect the sample material.

□ Remove swab and insert the sample into a collection vial containing 1 – 3 mL of viral transport media.

□ Break the swab handle at the marked breakpoint and close the vial.



<https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/clinical/diagnostic-testing/specimen-collection.html#swab-testing>.