Pooled sample collection for the weekly asymptomatic screening programme for COVID-19

Taking your sample may cause minor discomfort for a few seconds, but it shouldn’t hurt.
Thank you for helping us keep Cambridge safe!

Step 1 – Your pool lead should ensure that everyone in your testing pool is ready, and that everything is in place to start swabbing. The sample tube should be located in a shared area, such as a kitchen or bathroom. Remember to maintain social distancing throughout!

Step 2 – Your sample should be taken in your own room or bathroom, by yourself, with the door closed.

Step 3 – Gently blow your nose and cough into a tissue. Throw the tissue away.

Step 4 – Wash your hands.

Step 5 – Remove the swab from its wrapper.

Step 6 – Open your mouth wide and gently rub the fabric tip of the swab over both tonsils at the back of your throat, rotating as you do so. Try not to touch your tongue, teeth, cheeks, gums, or any other surfaces with the tip of the swab.

Step 7 – Insert the same end of the same swab gently into your nostril about 2.5cm (1 inch), or until you feel some resistance. Rotate the swab and slowly remove it.

Step 8 – Return the swab to the inside of its wrapper, taking care not to touch it on anything else.

Step 9 – Wash your hands.

Step 10 – Carry the swab into the room with the sample tube, ensuring that it remains inside its wrapper.

Step 11 – Remove the swab from its wrapper, snap off the unused end, and place the end with the fabric tip in the sample tube. Make sure the fabric tip is facing down. Dispose of the unused end and the wrapper in a waste bin, in the same way you would dispose of dental floss. You and the other members of your testing pool should take it in turns, until all your swabs are placed in the same sample tube.

Step 12 – Wash your hands.

Step 13 – Once you and the other members of your testing pool have placed all your swabs in the sample tube, your pool lead should securely screw on the lid and double-bag the sample, then wash their hands.