

<p>SECTION: Transportation of Dangerous Goods COVID-19 Specimens.</p> <p>FOR: Health Centres and Nursing Stations sending Specimens for COVID-19 Testing</p>	<p>FIRST NATION HEALTH AUTHORITY: Nursing Services</p> <hr/> <p>DATE: June 3, 2020 BY: Nursing Services</p>
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TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

Transport Canada regulations requires that all COVID-19 specimens be transported under Category B in P650 packaging. All sites, both health centres and nursing stations, are required to transport COVID-19 specimens in Category B packaging, even if it is a short distance to the local lab. The only case where TDG regulations do not apply is transport within a facility.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

TDG training by road vehicle or vessel is required 36 months after date of issue; transport by aircraft is required 24 months after date of issue. The employer and the employee must sign training certificates. Generally, remote certified community health nurses (CHNs) at nursing stations require Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) for air and ground transport and CHNs at health centres require TDG for Ground only.

For transporting specimens, train and designate a staff member who is there regularly and would be available to pack the samples to be ready for transport to the laboratory. It would be ideal to have a back-up individual as well in case of absence. This role is not exclusive to nurses i.e. a nurse program assistant.

Nurses employed by FNHA are required to complete their TDG for Ground or for Air and Ground training with an external instructor contracted by FNHA, training that must be completed in a timely manner. Please refer to your nursing practice consultant for further information. CHNs requiring certification can contact Jessica.Chien@fnha.ca. Nurses hired by bands need to contact their community health practice consultants in their region for further direction and support to complete TDG training.

DEFINITIONS

Transportation of Dangerous Goods: the transporting of infectious substances by all modes of transport while ensuring public safety through the adherence to packaging requirements and safety standards.

Infectious substance: any substance that is potentially disease causing to humans or animals such as viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi or other agents. Cultures that contain pathogens may be blood, tissue, organs, and bodily fluids.

CLASSIFICATION

Based on the following classification, specimens are categorized, labelled and packaged accordingly. COVID-19 is an infectious substance that must be transported using Category B packaging.

Transporting Specimens as Category B

Category B infectious substances may be responsible for causing disease in humans or animals, but the likelihood of contracting the disease upon exposure is extremely remote. The proper shipping name of a Category B substance is:

- UN3373 – BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE, CATEGORY B

The key concept of Category B shipping is a triple packaging system.

PROCEDURE

COVID-19 specimens such as (nasopharyngeal) NP swabs are considered to be regulated infectious substances by Transport Canada. This is because of the following factors:

- 1) World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 a pandemic.
- 2) The clinical staff has taken the specimen because the patient has met the criteria for potentially being infected by COVID-19.
- 3) There is professional reason to believe that the material being transported may contain COVID-19 virus.

Nurses deemed competent, as per their professional standards and required education, to perform an NP swab will follow the [FHNA Nasopharyngeal Swab Testing clinical procedure](#).

PACKING

There two options for packing for Category B regulated transport requirement. One is [Upward Packaging](#) and the other is [Saf-T-Pak](#).

The key difference is that Upward Packaging requires only one type of durable bag (95 kpa bag), while Saf-T-Pak requires double bagging.

1. UPWARD PACKAGING

Use a UN3373 Certified packing system to transport the specimen. It must have all the components required as follows:

- a. Primary receptacle (e.g., NP swab in tube)
- b. Secondary packaging: place absorbent and sample in 95 kpa bag as shown in picture below at bottom left hand side (do not use a regular biohazard bag). Place in Category B box.
- c. Place an ice pack in two regular biohazard bags to prevent water leakage. In addition to the two biohazard bags, you can also wrap the ice packs in a blue pad. Place the wrapped ice pack in the Category B box.
- d. Rigid outer package (e.g., Category B box)

Note: The outer box can be reused if not damaged.



2. SAF-T-PAK

Use a UN3373 Certified packing system to transport the specimen. It must have all the components required as follows:

- a. Primary receptacle (e.g., NP swab in tube)
- b. Secondary packaging
 - Place absorbent and sample in the bio bag supplied with the SAF-T-PAK system inside the clear plastic bag with the pink strip.
 - Seal the bag pushing all the air out.
 - Now place in the white typar bag pushing the air out and seal.
 - Place in the box shown below.
- c. Place an ice pack in two regular biohazard bags to prevent water leakage. In addition to the two biohazard bags, you can also wrap in a blue pad. Place the wrapped ice pack in the Category B box.
- d. Rigid outer package (e.g., Category B box)

Note: The outer box can be reused if not damaged.



Complete the information required on the outer package:

1. Information on the **consignor (shipper/you)**

- Name and location of shipment (office location). See example below:

From: John Smith
Lax Kw'alaams Nursing Station
1602 Legaic Street, Port Simpson, BC
VOV 1H0

2. Information on the **consignee (lab)**

- Name and address of lab. See example below:

To: BCCDC
c/o Public Health Laboratory
655 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC
V5Z 4R4

3. Ensure that the Category B information is present.

- Biological substance, Category B, UN3373 Diamond

4. Ensure CANUTEC information is on the box, including the 24-hour number for CANUTEC: 1-888-CAN-UTEC (226-8832). This can be typed or written on a sticky label. The 24-hour number must be on the same side as information in (3).
6. All samples and requisitions must include:

Patient Information

- Patient's full legal name;
- Date of birth;
- Personal health number (PHN); and
- Date/time of collection and reminder/name of collector;
- Test name (COVID-19 NAT).

NOTE: Samples with inadequate information will delay testing**

****IF THE SAMPLE IS TAKEN FROM A HEALTH CARE WORKER THE SAMPLE NEEDS TO BE LABELED ACCORDING TO [BCCDC TESTING GUIDELINES](#)**

Physician/nurse practitioner information

- First/last name;
- MSP number;
- Address; and
- Phone/fax

NOTE: Complete physician/nurse practitioner information must be on the requisition to ensure report delivery.

Note: More than one specimen in an individual, sealed biohazard bag can be shipped in the same box.

REQUISITION:

Use the [Virology Requisition](#)

Review [BCCDC testing guidelines](#) to ensure you label specimens appropriately.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of spill or release of contents, staff should follow the Blood and Body Fluids Exposure (BBFE) clean-up procedures located in the nursing station or health center. Staff should also immediately contact their direct supervisor/manager.

REFERENCES:

Government of Canada. 2020. *COVID-19: Requirements for safe transportation of infectious substances (Class 6.2)*. Retrieved May 14, 2020 from:

<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/covid-19-requirements-safe-transportation-infectious-substances-class-6-2.html>

Government of Canada. 2020. *Transportation of dangerous goods regulations*. Retrieved May 14, 2020 from:

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Vancouver Coastal Health. (2020). *Transportation of Dangerous Goods-Coronavirus (COVID-19) Specimen*. Retrieved from Shared Health Organizations Portal: <http://shop.healthcarebc.ca/vch/VCHDSTs/D-00-16-30279.pdf>