



Paediatric Intensive Care unit Nursing Procedure: Naso-pharyngeal Aspirate (NPA)

Why ?

An NPA may be carried out in order to establish the type of virus causing an infection. This knowledge then enables the doctor to prescribe the appropriate treatment.

What does an NPA diagnose?

- * RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus),
 - Influenza A & B
 - Para-influenza 1,2 & 3
 - Adenovirus
 - Mycoplasma pneumoniae
 - Bordatella pertussis (Whooping Cough)
 - Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

Universal Factors	Rational
Specimen collection should be undertaken in a sterile environment.	To prevent contamination of the specimen and cross infection of the patient.
Explain the procedure to the child and family before commencing.	To alleviate stress and anxiety
Ensure specimen containers are correctly labeled with patients name, hospital number and type of specimen. Also ensure that they are accompanied with a laboratory request form, which has been filled out correctly with the child's history and any medication that they may be taking.	To help prevent mistakes and ensure correct investigations are carried out. Some medications can affect the specimen and provide abnormal results.

Equipment needed,

- Sputum/mucus trap
- Suction catheter
- Gloves
- Suction apparatus
- 0.9% Sodium Chloride

Action	Rational
Explain the procedure to the patient and carer	To gain informed consent and ease any concerns or anxiety.
Collect necessary equipment	To be prepared to undertake the procedure
Talk the child and parent through each step of the procedure	To further reassure the child and parent and keep them informed.
Ensure the child is in an easily accessible position. You may need assistance.	To ensure safety in providing a viable sample that is free from any contaminant such as blood.
Connect a sterile suction catheter to a source of suction and the sputum trap. Adjust the pressure as required (1,2)	To ensure a sterile and viable sample is obtained.
Carefully insert the suction catheter (without applying suction) into the nostril, parallel to the palate (1,3)	To avoid nasal trauma and cross contamination of the sample.
Apply vacuum to the catheter and slowly withdraw in a rotating motion. The suction catheter must not be in the nasal cavity longer than 10 seconds. (2)	To obtain a sample and avoid nasal trauma.
Repeat to other nostril if necessary. (1)	To gain an adequate amount of sample.
Following mucus collection flush suction catheter with a small volume of 0.9% sodium chloride. Seal mucus trap (2).	To ensure that the sample reaches the mucus trap.
Clearly label mucus sample and send immediately to the laboratory.	Ensure that the sample is tested correctly and efficiently, to allow a correct diagnosis and treatment if required.
Reassure the child and carer.	Alleviate anxiety associated with the procedure.

References,

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- 3 Wilson J., (2001)
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