

Sample Self-Collection

These are the instructions for how to self-collect a saliva sample for COVID-19 surveillance at Caltech through the Caltech COVID Surveillance Lab (CCSL).

1. Be sure you have not eaten or had anything to drink in the 30 minutes before you collect your sample.
2. Make sure you are using the bag that you registered using the bag's QR code.
3. Remove one sample tube, one plastic cup, one plastic dropper pipette, and one alcohol pad from the bag.
4. Dribble a pool of saliva from your mouth into the cup. Do not cough into the cup. The sample should be mucus-free saliva that flows. To help, try sliding the tip of your tongue along your gums behind your teeth to stimulate your salivary glands and deposit this saliva into the cup.
5. Unscrew the cap of the sample tube and use the pipette to fill the sample tube *half way* with saliva from the cup.
 - a. To use the pipette, pinch the bulb, place the tip into the saliva, and then let go of the bulb. Move the tip to the sample tube and then pinch the bulb again to push the saliva out of the pipette and into the tube.
6. Screw the cap back onto the sample tube without over-tightening and then wipe the outside of the tube with the alcohol pad.
7. Discard the used pipette, cup and alcohol pad in the trash.
8. Be sure to keep your sample tube at or around room temperature. Deposit your sample within 12 hours into one of the sample collection boxes on campus.

If you have questions you may direct them to Student Wellness Services by emailing covid19@caltech.edu.

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