

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Thursday, 9 September 2021

NEW DEVICE TAKES THE STING OUT OF COVID TESTING FOR KIDS

A new medical device, manufactured and developed in Melbourne, is helping reduce the anxiety some Victorian kids have been when being swabbed for COVID-19.

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Royal Children's Hospital are trialling a new device – Rhinomed Junior – to test children for COVID-19.

The device sits at the base of the nose and collects virus particles for testing. It comes in a range of colours and designs, such as moustaches and cat noses, making the whole procedure a lot less stressful.

Rhinomed Junior is currently being trialled with PCR tests at the Royal Children's Hospitals drive through COVID-19 testing clinic, which tests about 1500 children for COVID-19 per week.

About 250 children aged four to 18 will trial the device over the six-week trial and the results will be compared with 'traditional' testing methods.

Alternative COVID-19 testing methods are going to be needed to maintain high testing rates in the community. Children, especially young children, can often become stressed during tests which not only makes it harder to obtain a sample but is also distressing for the parents and treating clinicians.

The rate at which the device is inserted into the nose can be controlled by the young person which makes the experience less traumatic for all.

With a vaccine for children under 12 years yet to be approved and new variants continuing to emerge, nasal swabbing and testing remains the most effective tool in limiting the spread of COVID-19 amongst the youngest Victorians – which is why new technology that makes it even easier is so important.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Taking a medical test can be a frightening experience for some kids, but as we know, testing is critical in limiting the spread of COVID-19 among young Victorians."

"Rhinomed lets kids control the rate at which the swab goes in, which increases their sense of control and makes the whole experience a lot less stressful."

Quotes attributable to Trial Lead Dr Shidan Tosif

"Rhinoswab Junior has the potential to turn an unpleasant experience into a more relaxed and possibly even fun experience for children."