



COLLEGE OF DIETITIANS
OF ALBERTA

Ministerial Order regarding Dietitians performing nasopharyngeal swabs for the purpose of COVID-19 testing

December 1, 2020 (amended December 21, 2020)

Minister of Health, Tyler Shandro, issued a Ministerial Order allowing Registered Dietitians, Pharmacists, Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants to perform nasopharyngeal swabbing for the purposes of COVID-19 testing.

Normally, the Restricted Activity “to insert or remove instruments, devices, fingers, or hands beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow” only applies to Registered Dietitians and Registered Nutritionists authorised by the College, when “inserting or removing nasoenteric tubes, if in the provision of nutrition support the regulated member is providing enteral nutrition.”

The Government of Alberta has proposed a plan to increase the testing of COVID-19 for the purpose of combatting our current Public Health Emergency. Because Registered Dietitians already have the ability to be authorized related to this restricted activity, the Government has issued a Ministerial Order to authorize Registered Dietitians under the *Health Professions Act* to:

“insert or remove instruments, devices, fingers, or hands beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow for the purposes of nasopharyngeal swabbing”.

The Government, the College and related stakeholders are working out the details for implementation of the Order.

At this time the College asks RDs to be aware of this Order, but not to act on it until further information on implementation is made available.

You can view the Ministerial Order online at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/ministerial-order-645-2020-health>.

Doug Cook
Executive Director & Registrar
College of Dietitians of Alberta

AMENDMENT on December 21, 2020:

Regulated members may contact the College office by email at execasst@collegeofdietitians.ab.ca to request the required forms for authorization to perform nasopharyngeal swabbing for the purposes of COVID-19 testing in Alberta. Regulated members must submit the “Notification and Supervision Consent Form” prior to beginning training, and submit the “Completion of Nasopharyngeal Swabbing Training Form” at the conclusion of training, in order to receive authorization by the College.