



Technical Bulletin



Date: March 20, 2020
Topic: Updated Interim Testing Criteria for COVID-19 *
Contact: Melissa Peek-Bullock, State Epidemiologist, Office of Public Health Investigations and Epidemiology
To: Health Care Providers, Medical Facilities, and Laboratories

Background:

Health care providers may test any patient with symptoms consistent with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath), however; a limited availability of COVID-19 laboratory testing and supplies is occurring both nationally and in Nevada. In response, public health is requesting providers to follow the below prioritized testing recommendations for symptomatic patients:

- Patients hospitalized with severe lower respiratory signs and symptoms of illness
- Health care providers and workers
- Patients in other public safety occupations (e.g., law enforcement, firefighter, EMS)
- Patients involved in an illness cluster in a facility or institution (e.g., health care, schools, corrections, homeless/shelters, other institution/congregate setting)

Please advise the following patients with COVID-19 symptoms to contact their health care provider to determine the need for COVID-19 testing should their symptoms worsen:

- Patients older than 60 years
- Patients with underlying medical conditions
- Pregnant women

Younger, healthy individuals with mild illness do not need to be tested. ** They should stay home on self-isolation for 7 days or 72 hours after symptom resolution, whichever is longer. Additionally, **laboratory testing is not recommended in persons who are asymptomatic.** However, a negative test result does not rule out an infection.

- Regardless of whether testing is performed or not, health care providers and public health professional should advise persons with symptoms of COVID-19 to:
 - Stay home except to get medical care
 - Separate from other people and pets at home
 - Practice proper hand hygiene; covering cough and sneeze with clean single-use tissues
 - Wear a facemask to reduce the spread of the virus at home; shared space and in a car
 - Clean all high-touch surfaces at least once a day
 - Self-monitor symptoms, and promptly call health care providers if symptoms worsen***
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- Seek medical attention if respiratory infection symptoms/illness start worsening including, but not limited to:
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to arouse
 - Bluish lips or face

Individuals with symptoms who are confirmed (or tested positive for COVID-19), and suspected cases who were directed to care for themselves at home, can discontinue home-isolation under the following conditions:

- a. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery - defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and resolution of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND,
- b. At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Individuals with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue home isolation when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness or respiratory symptoms.

Additional information - for household members, intimate partners, and caregivers of a self-isolated COVID-19 case to help prevent the infection from spreading to household member and the community are available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>.

- * Modification from CDC Guidelines recommended by the Nevada Governor's COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team (MAT) were based on:
 - Current COVID-19 spread and transmission in the community at the local/state level
 - Availability of testing and testing supplies for COVID-19
- ** Until testing supplies and laboratory capacity are increased, the MAT is urging providers to adhere the above recommendations.
- *** This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

Reporting

Health care providers should **immediately** notify both infection control personnel at their health care facility and their local/state health department in the event of a person under investigation (PUI) for COVID-19.

- **Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH):** (775)-684-5911 (M-F 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM); (775)-400-0333 (after hours)
- **Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD):** (702)-759-1300 (24 hours)
- **Washoe County Health District (WCHD):** (775)-328-2447 (24 hours)
- **Carson City Health and Human Services (CCHHS):** (775)-887-2190 (M-F 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM); (775)-887-2190 (after hours)

For More Information: Please contact DPBH M-F 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at (775)-684-5911. The after-hours line can be contacted at (775)400-0333.



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