PURPOSE

Guidelines for Testing Patients

DEFINITIONS

A. lower respiratory tract illness includes one of the following:
   • Cough
   • Tachypnea
   • Retractions
   • Auscultative findings

B. immunosuppressed or have underlying chronic health conditions includes one of the following:
   • Children < 6 months of age
   • Asthma (moderate or severe persistent)
   • Chronic lung disease (eg, cystic fibrosis)
   • Congenital heart disease
   • Sickle cell disease
   • Diabetes mellitus
   • Chronic kidney disorders
   • Chronic liver disorders
   • Weakened immune system due to disease (eg, HIV infection, AIDS, cancer) or medication (eg, chemotherapy or radiation therapy, chronic glucocorticoids)

C. Close contact is defined as

Close contact – within 6 feet of a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time.

Prolonged Period of Time – Unprotected (no PPE) exposure to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient who has signs/symptoms of respiratory illness for more than 5 minutes and patient is wearing NOT a mask.

GUIDELINES

Tier 1:
   • Critically ill patients receiving ICU level care with unexplained viral pneumonia or respiratory failure, regardless of travel history or close contact with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients;
   • Any person, including health care workers, with fever or signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory tract illness and close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient
within 14 days of symptom onset (including all residents of an LTC facility that has a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case);
• Individuals with fever or signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory tract illness who are also immunosuppressed (including patients with HIV), elderly, or have underlying chronic health conditions.
• Individuals with fever or signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory tract illness who are critical to pandemic response, including health care workers, public health officials and other essential leaders.

**Tier 2:** Hospitalized (non-ICU) patients and long-term care residents with unexplained fever and signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory tract illness. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the community should be considered. As testing becomes more widely available, routine testing of hospitalized patients may be important for infection prevention and management at discharge.

**Tier 3:** Patients in outpatient settings who meet the criteria for influenza testing. This includes individuals with co-morbid conditions.

**REFERENCES, REGULATORY REFERENCES, RELATED DOCUMENTS, OR LINKS**

CDC Guidelines