

COVID-19: Update #9

Updated Case Definition and Testing Criteria

Case/Contact/Traveller Recommendations & Health Teaching

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Rest and Retirement Homes

Date: March 17, 2020 (Updated as of 16:00)

To date, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health (SMDHU) has had four lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19. Press releases were issued regarding these new cases and are available on our website:

<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/HealthUnit/About/Newsroom.aspx>

Cases in Canada have been climbing and up to date totals are available at: [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\)](#).

Patient Direction by Clinician

1. **Probable/Clinical [Case definition for COVID-19](#) as of March 13, 2020 without testing.**

A person with fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) and/or onset of (or exacerbation of chronic) cough AND any of the following within 14 days prior to onset of illness:

- Travel to an impacted area* **or**
- Close contact with a confirmed or probable/clinical case of COVID-19 **or**
- Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to an impacted area

In whom laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19 is not available, inconclusive, or negative (if specimen quality or timing is suspect).

*Impacted area is based on current epidemiology and [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Situation Report](#) which currently includes over 100 countries.

Individuals that are clinically diagnosed with COVID-19 (without testing done) must be advised by the diagnosing physician to self-isolate for at least 14 days. If they are still symptomatic at the end of the 14 days, they must remain isolated until 24 hours post symptom resolution. Probable cases are to be reported to the Infectious Diseases Team at 705-721-7520 ext. 8809 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 to 4:30) or by faxing the [COVID Reporting Form](#) to 705-733-7738.

2. **People tested for COVID-19 WITH TRAVEL** (formerly known as persons under investigation)



- If the patient tested has travelled to **Hubei Province in China, Italy or Iran**, they must be advised to remain isolated for 14 days or until 24 hours after symptoms resolved (whichever is longer) and this should be **reported to SMDHU**.
- All other patients tested with travel to other locations must be advised to self-isolate until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved or 14 days (whichever is longer).
- **NOTE:** If a patient's symptoms resolve during the 14 day isolation, they are still required to stay isolated until day 14.
- **NOTE:** Effective immediately, SMDHU will **no longer be following up with patients who have negative lab results**.

3. People tested for COVID-19 WITHOUT Travel

- All other patients tested must be advised to self-isolate until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved or 14 days (whichever is longer).
- **NOTE:** Effective immediately, SMDHU will **no longer be following up with patients who have negative lab results**.

4. Asymptomatic Travellers

At this time, it is **recommended that all travellers** returning to Canada self-isolate for 14 days from the date they arrived in Canada. If they develop symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing) they should be directed to remain isolated for 14 days or until 24 hours after symptoms resolve. If their symptoms worsen, they should seek assessment with their health care provider, assessment centre or emergency department.

Additionally, the following travellers **must self-isolate** and monitor for signs and symptoms for 14 days upon arriving to Canada.

- Travellers returning from **Italy, Iran and Hubei Province in China**
- Children (**aged 0 up to and including 16 years of age**) whom have travelled outside of Canada.

Infection Prevention and Control

Droplet and Contact Precautions for COVID-19

As mentioned in the previous health fax, [Droplet and Contact precautions](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/updated-ipac-measures-covid-19.pdf?la=en) (surgical/procedure mask, isolation gown, gloves, eye protection - goggles or face shield) are recommended for the routine care and testing of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. See <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/updated-ipac-measures-covid-19.pdf?la=en>

Airborne precautions should be used when Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures (AGMPs) are planned or anticipated to be performed on patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. **NP or throat swabbing is not an AGMP.**

Health Care Providers are encouraged to consider social distancing with regards to their waiting rooms and should also consider cancelling non-essential procedures.

Personal Protective Equipment – Provincial Supplies

The Ministry of Health continues to be aware of ongoing challenges with regards to PPE supplies. SMDHU continues to advocate for adequate supplies for clinicians. If you have any questions, concerns or feedback regarding PPE, you can email the Ministry EOClogistics.moh@ontario.ca.

Specimen Collection

There are no longer provincial testing recommendations for COVID-19.

Instructions for Specimen Collection can be found on [our website](#). Please ensure that sample labelling is also done correctly and matches the information on the submitted [COVID-19 requisition form](#).

Additional swabs are now approved for the collection of COVID-19 samples:

Virus Respiratory Kit: 390082

Virus Culture kit: 390081

Virus Culture female: 390083

Virus Culture male: 390084

B. Pertussis kit: 390052

[Mycoplasma pneumoniae/Chlamydia pneumoniae PCR Kit: 390085](#)

Roche PCR Media Uniswab Kit: 300295

Droplet and contact precautions are sufficient to perform the testing. N95 mask for the clinician is no longer necessary.

For more information on the requirements, please visit PHO's Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Testing webpage at: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/test-information-index/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>.

Resources and Documents

There are a number of resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at www.smdhu.org/hportal as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Ontario](#)

The Government of Ontario has a dedicated website for Coronavirus which has general information as well as provincial PUI statistics which are updated daily. This can be found at the following website address: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>. Additionally, the Ministry of Health has a dedicated website for Coronavirus with all relevant guidance and information. This can be found at the following website address: www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus.