

Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)

Update for Hospital Clinicians including Emergency Departments
Please distribute this information to all relevant clinical staff

1. Test for COVID-19 in patients who present with fever OR acute respiratory infection AND in the 14 days before the onset of illness have either:
 - had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, OR
 - travelled to (including transit through) mainland China.
2. Test for COVID-19 in patients who have travelled (excluding transit) in Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea or Iran in the 14 days before onset of symptoms.
3. Test for COVID-19 in patients admitted to ICU with severe lower respiratory tract infection, regardless of travel history.

Testing update

- The above list of countries has been expanded following reports indicating that community transmission of COVID-19 is occurring in **South Korea** and **Iran**.
- The risk for travellers returning from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand is still considered to be lower than for mainland China but the situation is rapidly evolving.
- Test patients admitted to ICU with severe lower respiratory tract infection, regardless of travel history, when testing for other viral pathogens (additional specimens are not required). This recommendation is a surveillance measure to provide early warning of an undetected outbreak of COVID-19 in NSW. As the risk of COVID-19 in these patients is currently thought to be very low, these patients should be managed using infection control measures consistent with their provisional diagnosis.

Home isolation guidance

- Anyone who has visited mainland China (including transit) and close contacts of confirmed cases should self-quarantine for 14 days, even if they have tested negative for COVID-19 during that period. See [Home isolation guidance for close contacts and recently returned travellers from mainland China](#) for information on travel.
- Patients must undertake self-isolation while awaiting results of COVID-19 testing. If not in self-quarantine patients' self-isolation can cease if their COVID-19 test is negative. All patients with a respiratory illness should be advised to stay home until well.

Infection control

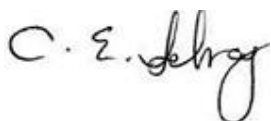
- When a patient with fever or respiratory symptoms who has been in China or in contact with a confirmed case presents, give them a surgical mask to wear and place them in a separate room.
- Use standard, contact and droplet transmission precautions when managing suspected or confirmed cases.
- Add airborne precautions when collecting respiratory specimens from patients with severe symptoms and during aerosol-generating procedures.
- For more information, see CEC Infection Prevention and Control—hospital setting:
http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/567987/Infection-control-nCoV-2019-Hospital-Setting-V2-.pdf

Reporting of suspect and confirmed cases

- Notify **infection control** and the **public health unit** (1300 066 055) about confirmed cases and any suspected patients requiring hospitalisation on clinical grounds.

For more advice

- Contact your infectious disease service or public health unit (1300 066 055) or see:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>



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NSW 25 February 2020