Interim COVID-19 Testing Approach for Assessment Centres and Clinicians

Does patient have symptoms?¹

No

Do NOT test for COVID-19, regardless of travel or exposure history

Yes

Does patient show clinical signs of severity that prompt consideration for admission?²

Yes

Refer to ED by contacting Triage RN and asking where patient should be brought.

If available, nurse should accompany patient to ED

No

Is the patient’s age ≥ 60?

Yes

Does the patient have an underlying health condition of concern?³

OR

No

Does patient fall into one of these groups?:

• Contact of a Confirmed Case
• Occupation within at-risk settings⁴
• Long Term Care or Retirement Home Resident
• First Nation Community member living on-reserve
• Testing specifically directed by Public Health

¹Symptoms (any of):
1. Fever (greater than 38 degrees Celsius, without another clear cause)
2. New onset cough or dyspnea or worsening of chronic cough or dyspnea
3. Myalgias, fatigue, headache, sore throat, rhinorrhea, diarrhea
   Symptoms in young children may be non-specific (for example lethargy, poor feeding)

²Signs of severity:
1. New shortness of breath, particularly at rest
2. Chest pain
3. Lethargy or drowsiness
4. Unstable vital signs

   Need for ED referral is a clinical judgment

³Health conditions of concern:
1. Chronic lung disease
2. Cardiovascular disease
3. Cerebrovascular disease
4. Diabetes
5. Hypertension
6. Cancer or immunosuppression
7. Current smoking

⁴Occupation within at-risk settings:
1. Any healthcare setting, including long-term care facilities
2. Retirement homes
3. Other settings with vulnerable populations

Patients presenting to ED that have travelled outside of Canada or have close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 within 14 days of onset of symptoms, should identify themselves as a probable case of COVID-19 when they arrive

This is an interim approach which supports judicious use of testing supplies. This approach focuses on confirming COVID-19 in the most ill, those most likely to become severely ill, vulnerable populations and those that may contribute to outbreaks amongst the vulnerable.

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