



Public Health management of Covid 19 Cases and Contacts

COVID-19, like other coronaviruses, is thought to mainly spread from person-to-person between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes. While evidence suggests that COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission, it most commonly spreads during close contact.

COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. The precise ways the virus spreads is an area of continued study. Period of Communicability Available data indicate that persons with mild to moderate COVID-19 remain infectious for no longer than 10 days after symptom onset. Persons with more severe to critical illness or severe immunocompromise likely remain infectious no longer than 20 days after symptom onset.

Patients are believed to be contagious two days prior to symptom onset (or, for persons who tested positive for COVID-19 but have not had any symptoms, the two days before the date the first positive viral test was collected).

Isolation Patients with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection should be asked to wear a facemask or cloth face covering, if tolerated, and be evaluated in a private room with the door closed and a dedicated bathroom. Airborne infection isolation rooms (AIIRs) should be reserved for patients who will be undergoing aerosol generating procedures. Healthcare personnel entering the room should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and use eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield). Ill people who are being evaluated for SARS-CoV-2 infection and do not require hospitalization for medical reasons may be cared for and isolated in their home. Isolation is defined as the separation or restriction of activities of an ill person with a contagious disease from those who are well for a minimum of 10 days.

Quarantining close contacts of a patient is part of preventive spread of confirmed cases, in consultation with a state or local health department, testing is recommended for close contacts of persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection because of the potential for asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission. Persons with known or suspected exposure to SARS-CoV-2 should be instructed to follow quarantine protocols for COVID-19 even if they are tested and results are negative. Close contacts of a confirmed case who are ill and do not require hospitalization for medical reasons may, in consultation with the state and local health department, be cared for and isolated in their home while being evaluated for COVID-19 infection. Close contacts of a confirmed or probable case should be quarantined for 14 days after their last contact with a case.

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