COVID-19
NEW Questions and Guidance

Updates will be provided periodically, as needed, to reflect new FAQs and newly released guidance.

3/29/2020

1. URGENT ISSUE: Process for Disinfection of N95 Respirator Masks for Reuse?

Given the urgent need for additional N95 respirator masks, the Florida Hospital Association (FHA) is sharing critical information on how to disinfect N95 masks for reuse.

The ECRI Institute recently presented a webinar, Safe Respirator Usage When Supplies Are Short, which featured recommendations from ECRI experts on how to use N95 respirators safely during shortages due to COVID-19. The program references a protocol developed by the University of Nebraska that illustrates how to safely and effectively disinfect N95 masks for reuse by using ultraviolet germicidal irradiation. View additional information on the process online.

The Association appreciates ECRI Institute for broadly sharing its expertise with all health care providers as we respond to the COVID-19 crisis. We will continue to share information on this important topic as it becomes available.

2. What are the criteria for discontinuation of transmission-based isolation precautions for patients who have previously tested positive for COVID-19?

When the patient meets ALL of the following criteria, COVID-19 isolation precautions are no longer required:

- Resolution of fever, without the use of antipyretic medication.
- Improvement in illness signs and symptoms.
- Negative COVID-19 tests from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal specimens collect at least 24 hours apart.
- NOTE: Two negative tests are required ONLY for patients who previously tested positive. All others require only one test.

3. What is the procedure to process state laboratory COVID-19 expedited testing for hospitalized patients AND symptomatic healthcare providers?

- Call Florida Department of Health (DOH) Central Office at 850-245-4401 to request a PUI number. Advise that you are requesting an expedited test for a hospitalized patient or symptomatic healthcare provider.
- In the event that you are unable to reach DOH Central Office at the above number OR you are not immediately provided with a PUI number, complete the state lab test requisition and ship the specimen to the nearest Bureau of Public Health Laboratories location. (PUI number preferred but not required.)

4. When screening patients for COVID-19, what are the current “restricted and high-risk travel areas” to be considered?

CDC and Florida Department of Health advises that the following international and domestic areas are included:

- Travel on a cruise ship
- International travel – see CDC website for a complete listing https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices
  - China
  - United Kingdom and Ireland
  - Israel
  - Europe
  - South Korea
  - Australia
  - Iran
  - Malaysia
  - Chile
  - Venezuela
  - Japan
  - Canada
  - Domestic
  - New York
  - New Jersey
  - Connecticut

This listing is frequently updated - see CDC website for a current and complete listing.

For additional questions, contact covidresponse@fha.org