



## Health Update

March 13, 2020

### COVID-19

This is a health update for ALL MEDICAL PERSONNEL about with updates related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). At this time, we have confirmed ONE positive case of COVID-19 in Fresno County, in a returned traveler from a Grand Princess Cruise. We anticipate that there may be additional cases in the future, based on state and national trends. For the general population, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at the current time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is low.

As an added step to ensure readiness within our local health care community, we are sharing some key points and important weblinks below, to update and inform health care practitioners with reliable information sources.

**1. Monitoring/ screening criteria and self-isolation criteria have been modified. At this time, these groups should be asked to self-isolate for fourteen (14) days IF THEY ARE ASYMPTOMATIC, and to contact the Fresno County Department of Public Health (FCDPH) for further guidance:**

- a. Travelers from China, Iran, South Korea, Japan, and Europe
- b. Travelers to Fresno from any US city/ county with more than 10 COVID cases
- c. Close contacts or household members of any COVID-19+ patients

See also:

- <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/PublishingImages/COVID-19/CORONAVIRUS-FINAL-2.png>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-Traveler-Info-Card.pdf>

**2. Testing criteria have been expanded. At this time, the following patients qualify for COVID-19 testing IF THEY HAVE SYMPTOMS (fevers, respiratory viral symptoms of cough, sneeze, or shortness of breath).**

- a. Travelers from China, Iran, South Korea, Japan, Europe (including Italy), or any country with sustained community transmission
- b. Travelers to Fresno from any US city/ county with 10 or more COVID-19 cases or known community transmission
- c. Close contacts (such as health workers) or household members of any COVID-19+ patients
- d. Unexplained pneumonia in a hospitalized patient
- e. Influenza-like illness in the elderly, immunocompromised patient
- f. Anyone else you feel has HIGH likelihood of having COVID-19 infection—contact the (FCDPH) as needed for additional guidance.

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Categories of Health Alert Messages:

**Health Alert:** Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention

**Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

**Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action

**Health Information:** Provides general health information which is not considered to be of emergent nature

***Promotion, preservation and protection of the community's health***

1221 Fulton Street, Fresno, CA 93721 · P.O. Box 11867, Fresno, CA 93775  
(559) 600-3200 · FAX (559) 600-7687

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**REMEMBER: NOT ALL PATIENTS WITH MILD ILLNESS (WHETHER COVID-19 OR NOT) NEED TO BE TESTED, AS TREATMENT IS SUPPORTIVE. ALL PATIENTS SHOULD BE GIVEN STRICT INSTRUCTIONS TO DO SOCIAL DISTANCING WHILE SYMPTOMATIC.** SYMPTOMATIC PATIENTS SHOULD TAKE CARE TO STAY AWAY FROM ELDERLY OR IMMUNOCOMPROMISED RELATIVES OR COMMUNITY MEMBERS, WHO HAVE INCREASED RISK OF COMPLICATIONS AND MORTALITY FROM COVID-19 INFECTION.

3. **Lab Testing: This Process HAS CHANGED.** Testing is now offered at some public health labs, academic/university labs, and private labs (e.g. Quest and LabCorp, which do not require a PUI number to run the test). PLEASE REACH OUT TO any labs you already work with, to explore how to get testing done efficiently in those who need it.
  - a. If you need personal protective equipment (PPE) or swabbing supplies, email [cjack@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:cjack@fresnocountyca.gov).
  - b. **THE LAB WILL NOT SWAB THE PATIENT**—this needs to be done by clinical staff wearing appropriate PPE. Although PPE is an added step, it is not difficult. **See next page for PPE diagram, and** this brief instructional video on how to put on and take off PPE:  
<https://infectioncontrol.ucsfmedicalcenter.org/covid/donning-and-doffing-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-videos>
  - c. **Symptomatic patients should be masked immediately. Any patients who need to be tested should wait in areas separated from other patients, or even outdoors or in their vehicle, to prevent clinic-related COVID-19 spread.**
  - d. One nasopharyngeal and one oral (throat) swab should be submitted using plastic probes; these are the same ones that are used for influenza/ strep testing. **DO NOT** use wooden swabs.
  - e. Place all COVID-19 testing swabs in a single vial of viral transport medium (red screw-top vial) and ensure it is tightly closed.
  - f. Patients with influenza like illness should also be tested for influenza and other common respiratory pathogens which are still much more prevalent.
  - g. Once they leave your office or clinic they should be instructed to go home and maintain strict social distancing measures while they await test results.
4. **What if a patient I treated has been diagnosed with COVID-19?** A health care provider **WITH CLOSE, UNPROTECTED CONTACT TO A COVID-19 PATIENT** would be asked to self-isolate. Casual or non-close contacts will be asked to self-monitor (check daily temperature and pay attention to development of viral syndromic symptoms) but they can keep working. A close contact is defined as having all three of the following:
  - a. Real close – no mask worn by patient or provider, and interaction occurred within six (6) feet
  - b. Real symptoms: viral shedding occurs mainly while the patient has fever and symptoms of cough, sneeze, rhinorrhea, and malaise. While there is some evidence of asymptomatic transmission, this is considered low-risk at this time, and interacting with an asymptomatic patient would not trigger a self-isolation order.
  - c. Real COVID-19 infection—the infection needs to be confirmed by lab testing.
  - d. Again, if your encounter meets the three “REAL” criteria as above, self-isolation for 14 days will be recommended as the best approach. Per the CDC in situations where health care personnel must be working, it is required to wear a mask for the entire clinical shift AND check temperature daily. To minimize the chance of this happening— set up “front door screening” to make sure all symptomatic patients wear masks while in your clinical practice, and that you and your staff use PPE when interacting within 6 feet.
5. **What should I do if I feel ill while I am in a period self-isolation or self-monitoring?**
  - a. Call the FCDPH immediately or contact infection control and prevention at your place of work. We will arrange to have you tested for COVID-19.
  - b. Go home if at work and wear a mask while leaving the clinic.



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- c. Use social distancing measures, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. Avoid close contacts in public or at home, and do not participate in activities with any crowds.

Thank you for taking excellent care of your patients and our communities in this challenging time. We remain open to your questions and suggestions as a partner in meeting the health needs of the community.

FCDPH WEBSITE: [www.fcdph.org/covid19](http://www.fcdph.org/covid19)

**Phone Consults for Medical Providers:** Contact the FCDPH Communicable Disease Investigation Program (559) 600-3332, then option 1.

