



Public Health Idaho North Central District



Physician's ALERT Update...

July 31, 2020

PH-INCD recognizes that changes of recommendations from the CDC may be subtle or difficult for all providers to monitor. As a practitioner, if you have questions regarding calculating the “Infectious Period” or recommendations for time for quarantine or isolation, please contact our Epi Team via the **PH-INCD COVID Help Line, at 866-736-6632.**

Based on the best information available as of mid-July 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated recommendations for discontinuation of isolation or precautions for people who have a positive **PCR test** for SARS-CoV-2. **Key changes include:** shortening of the time after resolution of fever before discontinuation of isolation or precautions; removal of recommendations for a test-based strategy except for certain circumstances; and recommendation to not retest individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 and remain asymptomatic during the 3 months following symptom onset.

1. Duration of isolation and precautions

- Most patients with COVID-19 illness: isolation and precautions can be discontinued 10 days *after symptom onset* (including non-respiratory symptoms) and resolution of fever **for at least 24 hours**, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms.
- Patients with **severe illness**: extending duration of isolation and precautions for **up to 20 days** after symptom onset may be warranted and is recommended for healthcare workers with severe to critical illness or healthcare workers who are severely immunocompromised and were **not** asymptomatic throughout infection.
- Individuals who never develop symptoms: isolation and other precautions can be discontinued 10 days *after the collection date of their first positive RT-PCR test result for SARS-CoV-2 RNA.*

2. Use of PCR testing to discontinue isolation or precautions

- Most patients: a test-based strategy is **no longer recommended**. A test-based strategy may be considered for some healthcare workers (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>).
- Severely immunocompromised patients: a test-based strategy could be considered in consultation with infectious disease experts

3. Use of PCR testing after discontinuation of isolation or precautions

- Individuals who were previously symptomatic with COVID-19 who, after recovery, remain asymptomatic:
 - Retesting is not recommended **within 3 months after the date of symptom onset for the initial COVID-19 case**
 - **During these 3 months, isolation is not recommended in the event of close contact** with a SARS-CoV-2 infected individual
- Individuals who develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the **3 months** after the date of initial symptom onset:
 - If an alternative etiology cannot be identified, retesting for SARS-CoV-2 may be warranted.
 - Isolation may be considered during this evaluation especially if symptoms develop within 14 days after close contact with an infected person.
- Individuals who never developed symptoms: the date of first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA should be used in place of the date of symptom onset.

For more information, see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>.