

Date: October 30, 2020
To: North Zone Physicians
From: Dr. Kathryn Koliaska, North Zone Lead Medical Officer of Health & Areas 4,5,6
 Dr. Kristin Klein, North Zone Medical Officer of Health Areas 1,2,3,7,8,9,10
RE: Isolation and Testing for COVID-19

As physicians, you are key partners in the pandemic response and a trusted source of information for your patients and the public. The isolation criteria for children and youth (including those over the age of 18 who attend high school) have recently changed and we want to ensure that you have the most up to date information.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can be mild and are similar to influenza and other respiratory illnesses, therefore it is so important to make sure your patients know what to watch for and what to do if they have symptoms. The table below is a summary of the current isolation and testing requirements/recommendations in Alberta.

	Fever, cough, shortness of breath	Runny nose, sore throat	Loss of Taste or smell	Stuffy nose, painful swallowing, headache, chills, muscle or joint aches, feeling unwell, new fatigue or severe exhaustion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, conjunctivitis
Child/youth	1	2	3	2
Adult	1	1	4	4

- 1) If your patient has any of these symptoms, not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition, they should be tested for COVID-19 and are legally required to isolate for 10 days from when the symptom(s) started.
 - They must stay home except to be tested or to receive urgent medical care following the precautions outlined [here](#). They may not work or attend any public place while waiting for test results.
 - If the patient has a negative test result and they are feeling better, they can resume normal activities, even if the 10 days is not completed.
- 2) If your patient has only 1 of these symptoms, they should stay home. If their symptom is improving after 24 hours, they can return to school and other activities when they feel well enough to go. Testing is not necessary.
 - If the symptom worsens after 24 hours OR if they have 2 or more of these symptoms, testing is recommended but not required. The child can return to activities and school when their symptoms have resolved AND it's been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started.
- 3) If your patient has any of these symptoms, they should be tested for COVID-19 and should isolate for 10 days from when the symptom(s) started
 - If the patient has a negative test result and they are feeling better, they can resume normal activities, even if the 10 days is not completed.
- 4) If your patient has these symptoms they should isolate and be tested for COVID-19.
 - Anyone with active symptoms (even mild ones) should remain at home until their symptoms are gone. However, if they are feeling better they can resume regular activities, even if their test result is not back yet.
 - If the COVID-19 test comes back positive, the patient will be legally required to isolate at that time.

In addition to what is in the table, people of all ages who are close contacts of a case of COVID-19 *OR* who have returned from international travel in the last 14 days (except those enrolled in the [Alberta International Border Pilot Project](#)) are legally required to self-isolate (quarantine) for 14 days. If your patient fits in more than one category (eg. has a runny nose and is a close contact of a confirmed case), the isolation requirements would be whichever are the longest. Specific requirements also exist in high risk settings such as acute care and congregate care facilities. The most up to date guidance can be found at [alberta.ca/isolation.aspx](#) and [ahs.ca/COVID](#).

Albertans with symptoms of COVID-19 should visit [www.ahs.ca/covid](#), to complete the self-assessment and book testing completed through AHS public health. When AHS public health completes testing in the North Zone, tests are ordered under the Medical Officer of Health - Dr. Kristin Klein. **Note** - if testing for COVID-19 is part of clinical care of a patient, those tests should be ordered under the name of the attending physician.

All positive results for COVID-19 are automatically sent to public health who then completes a case investigation and contact tracing under the authority of Alberta's *Public Health Act*.

Thank you for your continued partnership. For your reference, this memo will be posted on AHS-MOH webpage [www.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/Page7082.aspx](#)