**Updated Covid-19 OSH information 250320**

**COVID-19 Telephone assessment and testing pathway for patients who phone general practice and healthcare settings other than receiving hospitals (updated 25 March)**

**Suspect case:**

A patient with acute respiratory illness (fever and at least one sign/symptom of respiratory disease, e.g., cough, shortness of breath);

OR A patient with any acute respiratory illness AND having been in contact with a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case in the last 14 days prior to symptom onset;

OR A patient with severe acute respiratory illness (fever and at least one sign/symptom of respiratory disease, e.g., cough, shortness of breath; AND requiring hospitalization) AND in the absence of an alternative diagnosis that fully explains the clinical presentation.

If the patient meets the above criteria and is also in one of the following categories:

* Symptomatic close contacts of a confirmed case
* Symptomatic healthcare workers
* Symptomatic at-risk groups that include persons with diabetes, immunosuppressed, chronic lung disease, chronic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, chronic renal disease, chronic liver disease and smokers
* Symptomatic household contacts of at-risk groups
* Symptomatic staff or residents in a long-term care facility
* Symptomatic prison staff and inmates where it may be difficult to implement self-isolation advice
* Symptomatic pregnant women\* (\*not because of a documented increase risk of complications but to ensure to safe clinical pathway of care

Then the GP will arrange COVID-19 testing using Healthlink. The patient will be advised who to contact if their symptoms worsen, including out-of-hours

If the patient does not meet the above criteria the GP will

* Advise patient to stay at home and self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days from the start of their symptoms, the last 5 days of which they should be without fever. Refer to the Patient information sheet for self-isolation (see below)
* Household contacts should also restrict their movements for 14 days after the case went into self-isolation. Refer to the information leaflet on Advice for people who share the same home with someone who has or may have COVID-19. (see below)

**Information for “Close Contacts” of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (updated 24 March)**

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/contacttracingguidance/Information%20on%20Close%20Contact%20COVID19%20V4%2024-03-2020.pdf>

this note also provides clarification on ‘restricted movements’ versus ‘self-isolation’

**Restricted Movements vs. Self-isolation**

Restricted Movements

Restricted Movements means avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible by staying at home or in your hotel, and applies when you have a higher chance of developing COVID-19 but don’t yet have any symptoms. Many people who have been exposed will not develop COVID-19, but they should all still restrict movements in case they do. Restricted movements are sometimes also called self-quarantine.

You can still go outside for walks, runs or cycles on your own, but you should not spend time in close contact with other people.

* You do this to stop other people, particularly vulnerable or high-risk people in your community, from getting coronavirus.
* You need to restrict your movements for 14 days if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 but you are:
* a close contact of a confirmed case of coronavirus (start from the last time you were in contact)
* returning to Ireland from another country (start from the day you arrived in Ireland)

Self-isolation

Self-isolation means staying indoors and completely avoiding contact with other people. This includes staying away from other people in your household. You need to do this if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 - this is to stop other people from getting infected, especially vulnerable people in your community.

You will need to self-isolate:

* if you have symptoms of COVID-19
* before you get tested for coronavirus
* while you wait for test results
* if you have had a positive test result for coronavirus.

If you have a negative or “not detected” test result you can stop self-isolation, but if you are a close contact you need to finish the period of Restricted Movements.

If you live with other people and you are self-isolating:

* Stay in a room with a window you can open.
* If you can, use a toilet and bathroom that no one else in the house uses.
* If you have to share a bathroom with others, use the bathroom last and then clean it thoroughly.
* Do not share any items you’ve used with other people.

There are two criteria for finishing self-isolation, and you can only finish when both have been fulfilled:

1. It’s been 14 days since your first symptoms started
2. You haven’t had a fever for 5 days

For example, if you started having headaches or coughing on the 1st of the month, and you had your last fever on the 12th, you need to wait until the 17th to finish self-isolation. If your last symptom was on the 6th, you would only need to wait until the 14th.

**Information for people with symptoms of COVID-19 (updated 24 March)**

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/contacttracingguidance/Information%20for%20a%20Person%20with%20Symptoms%20of%20COVID-19%20V4%2024-03-20.pdf>

**Information on “Cases” of COVID-19** **(updated 24 March)**

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/contacttracingguidance/Information%20on%20a%20%20Case%20of%20COVID-19%20%20V1%2024-03-20.pdf>

Finally, remember the words of **Dr. Michael Ryan, Chief Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme**

"be fast, have no regrets you must be the first mover. If you need to be right before you move, you will never win. Speed trumps perfection. The greatest error is not to move, the greatest error is to be paralysed by the fear of failure"

<https://twitter.com/SkyNews/status/1238504143104421888>