



# Emerging Infectious Disease (suspected COVID-19)

## Non-transport Guidance to Reduce Exposure and Spread

### History

- Flu-like Symptoms

### Signs and Symptoms

- Fever greater than 100.4 F
- Rhinorrhea, nasal congestion
- Productive Cough
- Chills
- Weakness/flu-like symptoms
- Body aches

### Differential

- Pneumonia
- Viral URI
- Bronchitis
- COVID-19
- Influenza

Dispatch Center Indicates positive COVID-19  
OR  
High Suspicion of COVID-19

Yes

No

Exit to Appropriate Protocol

### PPE Must Protect from Droplet/Fluid Contamination

#### Universal Precautions with proper PPE required

- N95 Mask, Impermeable Gown, gloves, and eye protection
- Limit patient contact to one provider only if possible
- All providers should attempt to maintain a distance of 6 feet or more from the patient when feasible and does not interfere with indicated patient care

#### Perform Assessment

- Age less than 50 years old
- Respiratory Rate between 8 and 20 breaths/min
- Pulse oximetry greater than 94% on room air
- Heart rate less than 100 bpm
- Systolic BP greater than 100 mmHg
- Fever greater than 100.4<sup>o</sup> F
- One or more viral symptoms present (cough, fever, nasal/chest congestion, sore throat, body aches)

Do All Criteria Above Apply?

Does the patient report:

- Chest pain, or
- Shortness of breath, or
- Syncope

Exit to Appropriate Protocol

### Destination Guidelines

If the patient is transported to the hospital

- Verbal Patient Care report: Every attempt to contact the hospital should be made via cellular phone. Only if unable to reach should the crew use the radio
- At Destination: The drive will make contact with the hospital staff while the primary provider remains in the unit
- Once patient has been cleared from the ambulance, carefully remove PPE and discard in the waste container in the patient's room by the door
- Ambulance Cleaning: Carefully clean/disinfect the ambulance and any surfaces contacted by the patient or provider before returning to service

### If Patient Consents to Non-transport

- Highest level of EMS certification to make decision
- Hand COVID-19 packet to patient
- Discuss Non-transport, self quarantine, and when to seek care following checklist (See PEARLS)
- Patient must make this decision on their own, has capacity to make decision, and has an appropriate support system in place in case EMS needs to be called on patient's behalf

Transport or contact medical control if patient does not meet criteria



## Non-transport Guidance to Reduce Exposure and Spread

### EMS Checklist: Safe to leave at home?

The patient is stable enough to receive care at home.

The patient meets all inclusion criteria in the protocol.

Appropriate caregivers are available at home.

Recommended: There is a separate bedroom where the patient can recover without sharing immediate space with others.

Resources for access to food, phone, and other necessities are available.

The patient and other household members have access to appropriate, recommended personal protective equipment (at a minimum, gloves and facemask) and are capable of adhering to precautions recommended as part of home care or isolation (e.g., respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, hand hygiene).

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interim Guidance for Implementing Home Care of People Not Requiring Hospitalization for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Updated on February 12, 2020. Access at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html>*

#### PEARLS:

- **Recommended Exam: Mental status, skin, HEENT, heart, lungs, and neurological.**
- Extremes of age are more prone to heat emergencies (the very young or elderly).
- Common signs and symptoms of COVID-19: Fever; cough, sore throat/body aches, fatigue, shortness of breath/difficulty in "catching my breath". Rhinorrhea (runny/stuffy nose) is uncommon for COVID-19, but may be present or usually found with other viral or bacterial upper respiratory infections.
- Non-transport requirement. The patient is fully alert and oriented to his or her normal baseline and not intoxicated, to your knowledge.
- There are no obvious indications that this patient is experiencing an exacerbation of a chronic illness, such as COPD, CHF, asthma, etc.
- If the patient's temperature remains greater than 100.4°F and NSAIDs or acetaminophen have been used within the last 6 hours, transport should be highly encouraged.
- The patient must be able to contact 911 if needed again: functional phone, an adult who will be with the patient for most of the time, a LifeAlert type system, or other appropriate means of communication.
- COVID-19 is considered as a droplet-precaution viral disease. However, droplets may be aerosolized by coughing, sneezing, or nebulized medication use (home nebulizer) and remain in the air for several hours. Use an N95 mask on yourself when making patient contact. If the patient is transported, apply a surgical mask to the patient to protect others. Do NOT use an N95 mask on these patients.

## Care Instructions- Treatment at home

COVID-19, or Coronavirus, causes mild symptoms in most patients. We have determined that you are at low risk for having the virus or if you do have it, that you have a low risk for serious complications at this time. This is best treated at home.

The symptoms of a viral respiratory infection often start quickly. They include a fever, sore throat, and runny nose. You may also just not feel well. Or you may not want to eat much.

Antibiotics are not used to treat a viral infection. That's because antibiotics will not help cure a viral illness. In some cases, antiviral medicine can help your body fight a serious viral infection.

### How can you care for yourself at home?

- Rest as much as possible until you feel better. **STAY HOME FROM WORK OR SCHOOL AS LONG AS YOU ARE SICK.** Do not return to work until your symptoms are better or 14 days has passed since you were exposed to COVID-19.
- Take your medicine exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor or nurse call line if you think you are having a problem with your medicine.
- Take an over-the-counter pain medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve), as needed for pain and fever. Read and follow all instructions on the label. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 18. It has been linked to Reye's syndrome, a serious illness.
- Take over-the-counter cold medications to help with cough, congestion, or sore throat.
- Drink plenty of fluids, enough so that your urine is light yellow or clear like water. Hot fluids, such as tea or soup, may help relieve congestion in your nose and throat. If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.
- Gargle with warm salt water once an hour. This can help reduce swelling and throat pain. Use 1 teaspoon of salt mixed in 1 cup of warm water.

### To avoid spreading the virus

- The elderly, people on certain medications, and people with serious chronic health conditions are at greater risk of serious complications, even death, from COVID-19. Stay away from people at high risk.
- If you visit a healthcare facility, ask for a mask as soon as you enter the facility.
- Avoid large gatherings of people such as church, festivals, and sporting events.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Then throw the tissue away.

## Care Instructions- Treatment at home

- If you don't have a tissue, it is preferable to use your sleeve or elbow as a cover. Use your hand as a last resort and then clean your hand. You can also cough into your sleeve.
- Wash your hands often. Use soap and warm water. Wash for 20 seconds each time.
- If you don't have soap and water near you, you can clean your hands with alcohol (at least 60%) wipes or gel.

## When should you call for help?

### **Call your doctor or nurse call line now, call 911, or get to the Hospital**

#### **Emergency Department if:**

- You have a new or higher fever.
- Your fever lasts more than 48 hours without responding to over the counter fever medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve).
- You have trouble breathing.
- You have a fever with a stiff neck or a severe headache.
- You are sensitive to light.
- You feel very sleepy or confused.

#### **Before going to your medical appointment or calling 911, notify your healthcare provider that you may have been exposed to COVID-19.**

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor or nurse call line if:

- You do not get better as expected.