

This guidance applies to all facility types, including emergency departments, outpatient settings, inpatient settings, and intensive care.

Follow this guidance to

- determine if COVID-19 testing is indicated
- understand your options for laboratory testing
- safely care for your patient and collect specimens

**Remember:** Patients undergoing testing should **isolate** at home until results are received.

Confirmed cases should isolate at home for at least 7 days (and afebrile and feeling well for at least 3 days).

1

**Determine if COVID-19 testing is clinically indicated.**

*Does the patient exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19?*

**fever and cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing**

2

**Understand your options for laboratory testing.**

If a patient is **not** in a high-risk group, and a test result will not inform clinical care, please be mindful of ongoing shortages of specimen collection materials and reagents.

If patient is in a **high-risk group\***, a consultation for testing can be performed through TDH. You may also consider testing through **Quest, LabCorp, or hospital lab**. These options do not require TDH approval.

3

**Safely care for your patient and collect specimens.**

| Setting      | Target Personnel                  | Activity                                   | Type of PPE or procedure   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Triage       | Healthcare Personnel              | Preliminary screening (not direct contact) | Maintain spatial distance of >3 ft<br>No specific PPE required for HCP   |
|              | Patient with respiratory symptoms | Any  | Place surgical mask on patient<br>Minimize time in waiting room  |
| Patient Room | Healthcare Personnel              | Direct patient care                        | Gown, gloves, facemask, eye protection (goggles or face shield)  |
|              | Healthcare Personnel              | Specimen collection <sup>1</sup>           | Gown, gloves, facemask, eye protection *Depending on PPE supply, consider use of N-95 respirator if there is concern about aerosol generation (no AIIR required) |
|              | Healthcare Personnel              | Aerosol-generating procedures <sup>2</sup> | Gown, gloves, N-95 respirator, eye protection (goggles or face shield)   |
|              | Patient with respiratory symptoms | Routine clinical care                      | To the degree possible, patients with respiratory symptoms should wear a surgical mask during encounters with the healthcare team                                |

- \*High-Risk Groups**
- Hospitalized patients
  - Contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases
  - Occupations with exposures to large numbers of contacts (e.g., teachers)
  - Healthcare workers
  - Nursing home residents
  - Severely immunocompromised patients
  - Pregnant women

To request testing at TDH, please call **615-741-7247**.

<sup>1</sup> Preferred specimen type is an NP swab and OP swab combined into a single collection vial.  
<sup>2</sup> Aerosol generating procedures include (but are not limited to) sputum induction, airway suctioning, endotracheal intubation, bronchoscopy, positive pressure ventilation (BiPAP, CPAP), nebulizer treatment, and tracheostomy care.