July 23, 2020

South Dakota Guidance on Testing of Asymptomatic Close Contacts and Isolation Discontinuation

General Testing Recommendations for Viral Tests
Medical providers are recommended to test individuals with signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 infection, including:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea


Key Points:
- CDC recommends testing for all symptomatic and asymptomatic close contacts of COVID-19 cases, if testing is available.
- SD-DOH recommends that close contacts in the following groups receive the highest priority for testing:
  - Hospitalized patients
  - Healthcare personnel
  - First responders (e.g., EMS, law enforcement, firefighters)
- As additional testing capacity is available, SD-DOH encourages medical providers to test close contacts according to the CDC Priority Levels:
  - Priority 1
    - Individuals living, working, or visiting acute care, skilled nursing, mental health, and long-term care facilities
    - Individuals living, working, or visiting community congregate settings (e.g., correctional facilities, homeless shelters, educational institutions, mass gatherings, and workplaces)
    - Members of a large household living in close quarters
    - Individuals who live in, or providing care in, households with a higher risk individual
  - Priority 2
    - Critical infrastructure workers
    - Individuals 65 years of age and older
    - Individuals at higher risk for severe disease
    - Pregnant women


Key Points:
- Test-based strategy for release from isolation is no longer routinely recommended by CDC. Use of testing to discontinue isolation or transmission-based precautions should only be considered for severely immunocompromised patients in consultation with an infectious disease physician.
Updated criteria for release of isolation for persons at home:
- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since:
  - Resolution of fever, AND
  - Other symptoms have improved

*Persons who never developed COVID-19 symptoms may be released 10 days after their first positive test.*

Updated criteria for discontinuing transmission-based precautions for patients or residents in a healthcare setting (e.g., acute care hospital or long-term care facility):
- A test-based strategy is no longer routinely recommended because, in the majority of cases, it results in prolonged isolation of patients who continue to shed detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA but are no longer infectious. A test-based strategy could be considered for patients (e.g., severely immunocompromised) in consultation with an infectious disease physician if concerns exist for a patient being infectious for more than 20 days.
- For patients with mild to moderate illness who are not severely immunocompromised:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, AND
  - At least 24 hours have passed since:
    - Resolution of fever, AND
    - Other symptoms have improved
- For patients with severe to critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised:
  - At least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND
  - At least 24 hours have passed since:
    - Last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
    - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

*For severely immunocompromised patients who were asymptomatic throughout their infection, transmission-based precautions may be discontinued when at least 20 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.*

**Severe illness:** Individuals who have respiratory rate >30 breather per minute, SpO2 <94% on room air (or a decrease >3% from baseline for patient with chronic hypoxemia), ratio of arterial partial pressure of oxygen to fraction of inspired oxygen (PaO2/FiO2) <300 mmHg, or lung infiltrates >50%.

**Critical illness:** Individuals who have respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ dysfunction.

**Severely immunocompromised:** Not clearly defined. Includes conditions such as being on chemotherapy for cancer, untreated HIV infection with CD4 T lymphocyte count <200, combined primary immunodeficiency disorder, and receipt of prednisone >20mg/day for more than 14 days, may cause a higher degree of immunocompromise.

**Immune Response to SARS-CoV-2 and Potential for Re-Infection** available at [https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/index.html)
- Most COVID-19 patients mount serum antibody responses
- Even mild cases of COVID-19 result in development of antibodies
- Magnitude of antibody response roughly correlates with severity (consistent with other coronavirus infection)
- A portion of individuals with antibody responses may not develop serum neutralizing antibody responses
- By 8 weeks after discharge, a portion of patients have dropped below 50% inhibition neutralization threshold
- At this time, CDC has not identified any evidence for re-infection within 90 days of symptom onset

**Testing at the South Dakota Public Health Laboratory**
The following groups of individuals will be prioritized for viral testing:
- Hospitalized patients
- Healthcare workers, first responders, and active military, with symptoms
• Individuals living or working in institutional settings, such as long-term care facilities, with symptoms
• Underinsured or uninsured individuals, with symptoms
• Low-income individuals or those unable to pay for testing, with symptoms
• Homeless individuals with symptoms

**Whether a person tests positive or negative for COVID-19, preventive measure should still be used to protect yourself and others.**

Preventive measures include the following:
• Know how COVID-19 spreads to avoid being exposed to the virus
• Wash your hands often
• Avoid close contact with others outside your home
• Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others, such as at the grocery store or to pick up other necessities
• Cover coughs and sneezes to prevent the spread of the virus
• Clean and disinfect frequently touches surfaces daily