



## Technical Bulletin

Date: July 23, 2020

Topic: Guidelines for Discontinuation of In-Home Isolation and Transmission-Based Precautions among Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19

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To: Health Care Providers, Medical Facilities and Laboratories, Business and Industry

This technical bulletin is intended for anyone that has received a positive test for COVID-19 and describes the updated guidance for the discontinuation of home isolation for those that have been able to care for themselves at home, as well as hospitalized patients under transmission-based precautions. The guidance for COVID-19 continues to be updated as more information becomes available about the characteristics of COVID-19. The most recent CDC recommendations, published on July 17, 2020, no longer supports the test-based strategy for most cases; revises the period of time previously required to meet the criteria for **symptom-based strategy**, and updates CDC guidance for the discontinuation of isolation and transmission-based precautions among severely immunocompromised patients.

According to CDC, in most cases, the test-based strategy is no longer the method of choice for the discontinuation of home isolation and transmission-based precautions, so it should not be used as a requirement for recovered individuals to return to the workplace, unless it has been found by a health care provider to be clinically necessary.

**A test-based strategy is no longer recommended because it may result in prolonged isolation of patients who may continue to shed detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA fragments that are no longer infectious.**

### Symptom-Based Strategy

*Patients with [mild to moderate illness](#) who are not severely immunocompromised or persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were able to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:*

- At least 10 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

Note: For patients who are **not severely immunocompromised** and who were **asymptomatic** throughout their infection, transmission-based precautions and home isolation may be discontinued when at least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.

*Patients with [severe to critical illnesses](#) 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

Note: 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 [CDC Update published on July 22, 2020](#).

## Test-Based Strategy

In some instances, a test-based strategy could be considered for discontinuing transmission-based precautions earlier than if the symptom-based strategy were used. However, many individuals will have prolonged viral shedding, limiting the utility of this approach. A test-based strategy could also be considered for some patients (e.g., those who are severely immunocompromised) in consultation with infectious disease experts if concerns exist for the patient being infectious for more than 20 days.

### Criteria for Test-based Strategy

#### *Patients who are symptomatic:*

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved, **and**
- Results are negative from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens) tested using an FDA-authorized molecular viral assay to detect SARS-CoV-2 RNA.

#### *Patients who are not symptomatic:*

- Results are negative from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens) tested using an FDA-authorized molecular viral assay to detect SARS-CoV-2 RNA.

## Links to Full CDC Guidance

- [Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Patients in Healthcare Settings](#)
- [Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings](#)

## Quarantine

These strategies are not to be used for people that have come in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. Anyone that has come in contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19 **MUST** complete a 14-day quarantine, regardless of a negative test. It is possible to develop the disease at any point within the 14-day period after an exposure. It is also possible the amount of viral particles present at the time of a test may not be detectable if conducted too early in the disease's progression. This technical bulletin is only intended for those that have a confirmed positive test for COVID-19.

## Local Health Authority Contacts

If there are questions about the discontinuation of transmission-based precautions or the discontinuation of home isolation, contact your local health authority or the Division of Public and Behavioral Health for additional guidance.

- Carson City Health and Human Services (775) 283-4789
- Southern Nevada Health (702) 759-4636
- Washoe County Health District (775) 328-2427
- Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health 1 (800) 860-0620 or 2-1-1



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