COVID-19 Close Contact Determination in Patient Care Settings

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#Infection-Control

1. Was the exposed person within six feet of the infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period **OR** did they have unprotected contact with secretions or excretions of the infected person, such as being coughed on, changing diapers, or providing personal care without PPE? **If YES, the exposed person is a close contact**

2. Is the close contact exempt from quarantine (see page 5 at https://health.ri.gov/publications/guidance/COVID-19-Quarantine-and-Isolation-Guidance-by-Population.pdf)? **If NOT EXEMPT, the close contact must quarantine**

3. Did close contact occur outside of a healthcare setting? **If YES, close contact must quarantine unless EXEMPT**

4. Did close contact occur in a healthcare setting within six feet for 15 minutes or more? **If YES, see below to assess quarantine needs unless the close contact is EXEMPT**

**SCENARIO A: EXPOSED HEALTHCARE WORKER (HCW)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFECTED PATIENT</th>
<th>No PPE worn by HCW during exposure</th>
<th>Face mask or N-95 respirator worn by HCW during exposure (but no eye protection)</th>
<th>Face mask or N-95 respiration and eye protection worn by HCW during exposure</th>
<th>N-95 respirator, eye protection, gloves, and gown worn by HCW during exposure during aerosol-generating procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infected patient was not wearing a face mask during exposure</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>No work restrictions or quarantine*</td>
<td>-NA-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infected patient was wearing a face mask or N-95 respirator during exposure</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>No restrictions, in general, if both parties were wearing at least a medical face mask properly. Consider quarantine depending on room ventilation, duration and type of care provided during close contact, and sustained mask wearing during exposure.</td>
<td>No work restrictions or quarantine*</td>
<td>-NA-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerosol-generating procedure</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>No work restrictions or quarantine*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* HCW should follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices, including wearing a face mask for source control while at work, monitoring themselves for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and not reporting to work when ill, and undergoing active screening for fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 at the beginning of their shift. Any HCW who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should immediately self-isolate and contact their established point of contact, such as their occupational health program, to arrange for medical evaluation and testing.

March 3, 2021
### SCENARIO B: EXPOSED PATIENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infected HCW was not wearing a face mask during exposure</th>
<th>Exposed patient was <strong>not wearing</strong> a face mask during exposure</th>
<th>Assess PPE worn by patient during exposure, such as face mask, N-95, face shield, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFECTED HEALTHCARE WORKER (HCW)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Face mask</td>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>Perform risk assessment (see below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ N-95 respirator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Eye protection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Face shield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Determine PPE/source control worn by infected HCW during exposure:**

- **Type of interaction** that occurred between the patient and infected provider
  
  *An interaction involving manipulation or prolonged close contact with the patient’s eyes, nose, or mouth, such as dental cleaning, likely poses higher risk of transmission to the patient compared to other interactions, such as checking blood pressure.*

- **Ventilation** of the space where interaction occurred
  
  *A small room without negative pressure or frequent air exchanges per hour likely poses higher risk of transmission to the patient compared to a negative pressure room or room with frequent air exchanges per hour.*

- **Face mask** worn by patient
  
  *Patients not wearing a face mask would likely be at higher risk for infection compared to those that were wearing a face mask.*

- **PPE worn by infected HCW**
  
  *An HCW wearing a face mask or respirator and a face shield that extends below the chin might have had better source control than wearing only a face mask. Note that respirators with exhalation valves do not provide source control.*

- **Symptoms of infected HCW** during the patient interaction
  
  *The presence of symptoms such as cough may pose greater risk for transmission.*

- **Current health status of patient**
  
  *Is the patient currently admitted to a hospital or long-term care facility? These individuals, if infected, can be at higher risk for severe illness and have the potential to expose large numbers of individuals at risk for severe disease.*
Notes

- Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) case investigators use this tool and the COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Calculator to assess who is a close contact of a person with COVID-19 in patient care settings.
- In cases where outreach to a practice is not possible or is delayed, RIDOH encourages practices to use these two tools to identify those who have been in close contact with the person testing positive and should quarantine, or in cases of low risk, watch for symptoms.
- RIDOH encourages practices to use these tools to identify and inform staff and patients who should quarantine and who should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days from exposure.
- RIDOH also encourages practices to download and use this spreadsheet to list potentially exposed staff and patients in the infectious period with their phone numbers and dates of birth, perform a risk assessment, and determine an action for each as noted below. Return completed spreadsheets to RIDOH.COVID19LineLists@health.ri.gov.
  - **High risk:** quarantine
  - **Low to medium risk:** inform or send letter to those who were near the infected person but do not meet the criteria to quarantine or self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days
    - Medical letter template: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
    - Dental letter template: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
  - **No risk:** no action
- A close contact must quarantine if the contact with a COVID-19-infected person occurred during the infected person’s infectious period.
  - **If the infected person had COVID-19 symptoms**, the infectious period is two days before symptoms first appeared until they meet criteria to discontinue home isolation.
  - **If the infected person did not have COVID-19 symptoms**, the infectious period is two days before the specimen collection date until they meet criteria to discontinue home isolation.

RIDOH Resources

- [About COVID-19 Disease](#)
- [When do I need to isolation or quarantine for COVID-19?](#)
- [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Guidance by Population](#)
- [COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Calculator](#)