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 Owner: *Michelle Swetky: Infection Preventionist*
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Respiratory Illness/COVID-19 Stay at Home - Return to Work Guidelines

SCOPE:

Employees, non-employees, affiliates, volunteers, students, observers, contracted third parties etc.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the transmission of respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 to other employees and patients, as respiratory virus infections are a cause of significant morbidity and mortality among patients undergoing cancer care - **even very minimal symptoms can pose high risk for many SCCA patients**. This policy will provide employees with guidance on when they should stay home, when to get tested and when it is safe to return to work.

DEFINITIONS:

Onset Date: For the purposes of counting the days, the illness onset date is Day 0. Day 1 begins the next calendar day (e.g., Symptoms begin on Sunday; Sunday is day zero; Monday is day one; and Friday is day five). Additionally, "Onset Date" is either the day of symptoms beginning or the day of positive test, whichever is earlier. See Isolation Examples attachment.

POLICY:

Stay at Home - Return to Work Table

	Symptoms	When Should I Stay Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS COVID-19 Unknown/ Pending Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever (38°C/ 100.4°F) Chills Cough Sore throat 	<p>STAY HOME if you have one or more symptoms</p> <p>Fill out the online survey and Employee Health will contact you regarding COVID-19 testing.</p>	<p>Testing is recommended if available. If no testing is performed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 days after illness onset, [2] AND At least 24 hours have

	Symptoms	When Should I Stay Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath/ difficulty breathing • Myalgia (body aches) • Fatigue or malaise • Headache • Abdominal pain • Vomiting/ nausea • Diarrhea • Loss of smell or taste • Runny nose/ postnasal drip • Sinus congestion/ stuffy nose • Sneezing • Sputum production 	<p>Staff with chronic conditions see Chronic Symptoms</p>	<p>passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvement of symptoms <p>If you have a pending test result STAY HOME and then follow return to work guidance below based on test results</p>
<p>RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS</p> <p>Tested - COVID-19 PCR NEGATIVE</p>	<p>Any of the above symptoms</p>	<p>STAY HOME if you have one or more symptoms</p> <p>Staff with chronic conditions see Chronic Symptoms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms have significantly improved, AND • no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication), AND • Coughing, sneezing, nose blowing is infrequent, controllable, and does not interrupt patient care or work (without the use of fever-reducing or cough medication) * <p><i>*Discuss with your manager prior to returning to work if your unclear if your symptoms are</i></p>

	Symptoms	When Should I Stay Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
			<i>resolved enough to return to patient care.</i>
RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS Tested - COVID-19 POSITIVE	Any of the above symptoms	STAY HOME if you have one or more symptoms	<p>As of January 20th, 2022: Follow Contingency Staffing Strategy - Return to Work from COVID-19 Infection</p> <p><u>Contingency Staffing Strategy:</u> May return to work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvement of symptoms, AND • At least 5 days after illness onset, [2] AND • Negative FDA approved antigen test on day 5 (work on day 6)*, AND • At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications <p>If positive antigen on day 5, repeat test on day 7 , may return to work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative FDA approved antigen test on day 7 (work on day 8)*, AND • At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND • Significant improvement of symptoms <p>If persistent antigen positive or no tested completed, may return to work when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 days after illness onset (work on day 11), [2] AND • At least 24 hours have passed since last fever

	Symptoms	When Should I Stay Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
			without the use of fever-reducing medications. , AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvement of symptoms

1. Repeat testing is not indicated for employees whose symptoms have completely resolved as long as other criteria are met.
2. For the purposes of counting the days, the illness onset date is Day 0. Day 1 begins the next calendar day (e.g., Symptoms begin on Sunday; Sunday is day zero; Monday is day one; and Friday is day five). Additionally, "Onset Date" is either the day of symptoms beginning or the day of positive test, whichever is earlier. See Isolation Examples attachment.
3. Refer to [CDC's Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#) for the definition of mild, moderate, severe and critical illness and for the definition of severely immunocompromised.

Managers may clear employees to return to work using the guidance above.

Do not come to work if you are sick. We care about the health and safety of you, your colleagues, our patients, and visitors. We all need to work together to minimize the risk of spreading respiratory viruses at SCCA. If you are unsure if you should come to work, consult Employee Health.

Antigen Testing Guidance for SARS-CoV-2

Testing for COVID-19 and early isolation are important strategies for preventing the spread of this infection to others. The gold standard for testing for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is a molecular polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. Another testing option that is becoming more widely available and used in the community is Antigen testing. Antigen testing is not as sensitive as PCR testing and thus, is not SCCA's preferred method for determining if someone is currently infected and infectious with COVID-19.

SCCA Employee Health and Infection Prevention wanted to provide guidance on how antigen testing can inform next steps in management of COVID-19, whether that be confirmatory testing, isolation or seeking more information based on unique scenarios.

Please Note: If ever testing due to symptoms (even if mild), persons should be isolated. The only time isolation is not required if testing is being used for asymptomatic persons. Do not come to work with symptoms (even if mild) consistent with COVID-19. In these scenarios, use either the [online survey](#) or by directly communicate with Employee Health at employeehealth@seattlecca.org for assistance in evaluating your symptoms and getting tested.

Antigen Test Result	Staff Situation		
	Asymptomatic	Symptomatic	Exposure
Negative	Determine why testing performed [^]	Verify with PCR	Verify with PCR
Positive	Verify with PCR	Treat as True-Positive*	Treat as True-Positive*
Inconclusive	Verify with PCR		

**In times of critical staffing, antigen testing can be confirmed via PCR, but staff will be restricted from work until PCR results*

[^]If asymptomatic testing performed prior to travel/event (not related to exposure), then treat negative result as true-negative.

Chronic Symptoms

Staff with chronic symptoms or conditions should self identify to Employee Health and follow the guidance below until symptoms resolve:

- Complete baseline COVID-19 testing by completing the [online survey](#). Employee should stay home while baseline COVID-19 test is pending.
- Consult with Employee Health about chronic condition and rule out if symptoms may be due to other infectious causes
- If new or worsening symptoms develop, stay home and repeat COVID-19 test. If COVID-19 test negative, consult with Employee Health to rule out if symptoms may be due to other infectious causes
- If symptoms are stable, repeat COVID-19 test every two weeks for surveillance testing until symptoms resolve. Employee may continue to work while undergoing surveillance testing as long as they do not have new or worsening symptoms.

Conventional Staffing Strategy - Return to Work from COVID-19 Infection

For staff with mild to moderate illness who are not immunocompromised [3]:

- At least 10 days after illness onset, **[2] AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. , **AND**
- Significant improvement of symptoms

For staff with severe to critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised [3]:

- At least 20 days after illness onset, **[2] AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medication, **AND**
- Significant improvement of symptoms* **[1]**

****If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and are experiencing persistent symptoms at 10 days [2], please contact Employee Health at 206-606-2500 or email employeehealth@seattlecca.org***

Contingency Staffing Strategy - Return to Work from COVID-19 Infection

SCCA Incident Command Leadership should determine when staffing requires the use of a conventional, contingency, or crisis strategy for responding to staffing needs. During contingency or crisis strategy for responding to staffing needs, isolation and/or testing guidance may be made at the discretion of Infection Prevention and Employee Health based on the specific circumstances and the most current CDC guidance.

For contingency staffing strategy, employees that test positive for COVID-19 should follow the following return to work guidance:

- Significant improvement of symptoms, **AND**
- At least 5 days after illness onset, **[2] AND**
- Negative [FDA approved](#) antigen test on day 5 (work on day 6)*, **AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications

*Perform the antigen test on Day 5 only if symptoms are significantly improved.. If negative, you may return to work so long as all other criteria listed above are met.

If positive antigen on day 5, repeat test on day 7 , may return to work if:

- Negative FDA approved antigen test on day 7 (work on day 8), **AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, **AND**
- Significant improvement of symptoms

If persistent antigen positive or no tested completed, may return to work when:

- At least 10 days after illness onset (work on day 11), **[2] AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. , **AND**
- Significant improvement of symptoms

REQUIREMENTS:

REFERENCES:

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Approver	Date
Administrators PolicyStat: PolicyStat Administrators	1/20/2022
Terry McDonnell: SVP, Operations	1/20/2022
Michelle Swetky: Infection Preventionist	1/20/2022

Applicability

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance Outpatient Policies

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