Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

COVID-19 Contact Tracing Information for Healthcare Providers

Executive Summary

- COVID-19 testing is no longer restricted to patients with specific signs and symptoms.
- Providers should make sure the patient phone number is updated in the electronic medical record prior to ordering a test.
- Providers should advise tested patients to monitor their telephones closely for 72 hours after specimen collection, as they will receive a contact tracing call from MD COVID (240-466-4488) if positive.

Guidance on testing

COVID-19 testing is no longer restricted to patients exhibiting specific signs and symptoms. Providers may order a test any time it is clinically indicated. Patients may be tested at several state-operated sites, as well as at many retail pharmacies and other locations, without a provider referral. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) recommends that patients exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 be tested, along with those who are asymptomatic but have potentially been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Information for providers ordering a COVID-19 test

Prior to ordering a COVID-19 test, providers should verify the primary phone number and address of residence in the patient's electronic medical record and lab requisition form. If the patient provides a new phone or address, please update prior to ordering the test. Confirm that the number provided is a working cell phone number that the patient will have access to for the next 72 hours. It is vital to the contact tracing effort that we have the patient's correct telephone number. If the patient does not have a cell phone, please confirm at least one other phone number (home, work, other) that the patient will be able to answer reliably for the next 72 hours.

Please advise patients that if their test is positive, they will receive a call from the Maryland COVID Team with further instructions. The call will typically be made between 24 and 72 hours after specimen collection. The call will come from (240) 466-4488 and the caller ID message will say "MD COVID" (or Mechanicsville, MD if caller ID is unavailable). It is imperative that the patient answer calls from this number, as the contact tracing that follows will help prevent transmission of the disease, and keep their friends, family and neighbors safe. Please advise the patient that if they miss a call from this number, or receive a voicemail, they should return the call as soon as possible.

In some instances, the Maryland COVID Team may reach those with positive test results before the ordering provider is able to notify them of the result. However, the Maryland COVID Team notification does not replace notification by a provider, as MDH does not provide notification of negative results or make treatment recommendations for those with positive results.

Please instruct patients under your care who have clinical signs or symptoms of COVID-19 that they must isolate in their home until they have met each of these conditions:

- At least 10 days since symptom onset
- Fever-free without fever reducers for 72 hours
- Improvement of other symptoms

Please instruct these patients to ask household members to:

- Quarantine for 14 days
- Self-monitor temperature twice a day
- Seek testing for COVID-19
- Contact you or another healthcare provider if they experience symptoms

The contact tracing team will review these instructions with your patient during their initial interview if their test is positive.

As people who have COVID-19 without symptoms are still able to spread the virus, please instruct patients who may have been exposed to COVID-19 but do not currently have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 that, until they receive their test results, they should:

- Minimize contact with others as much as possible
- Wear a facemask over their mouth AND nose when out in public

Sample instructions to provide to patients for after their visit

Isolation is critical to preventing spread of the virus. If you are symptomatic today, beginning immediately, you are required to stay home except to get medical care. You may not work outside the home, and should advise your employer that you have COVID-19 symptoms and are awaiting your test results. Isolation means you must stay separated from other people by at least 6 feet. Cover your coughs and sneezes. Avoid sharing personal household items. Clean your hands often. Disinfect high touch surfaces daily. Try to remain in a separate room from other household members at all times. If you have to be in a room with others, wear a facemask over your mouth AND nose. Avoid the use of common areas as much as possible. For additional information: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

Because it is possible that other members of your household are infected but not yet experiencing symptoms, please ask them to quarantine for 14 days. This means that they will not leave the house except to obtain medical care. They should take their temperature twice a day, and contact a healthcare

provider or their local health department immediately if they experience a fever, cough, or other symptoms.

Upon receipt of a positive lab result you will be contacted by the Maryland COVID Team. This call will come from (240) 466-4488 and the caller ID message will say "MD COVID" (or Mechanicsville if caller ID is unavailable). Trained staff will review isolation procedures, provide other resources, and interview you to identify other individuals who you may have come in contact with while you were infectious. These staff will then contact those individuals to notify them of their possible exposure (without revealing your name or other identifying information) and instruct them to quarantine for 14 days to avoid further spread of the virus in your community.