DPH
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Interim Guidance for Clinicians Evaluating and Reporting COVID-19 Cases

GUIDANCE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please read this guidance in its entirety.

For the most up-to-date information about the COVID-19 pandemic, visit
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html and https://dph.georgia.gov.

All novel respiratory virus infections (including COVID-19) have been added to the list of diseases that are <u>immediately</u> notifiable by law in Georgia.

Recommendations for evaluating patients
- Obtain a detailed history for <u>**ALL**</u> patients being evaluated with fever and acute respiratory illness.
- Because of the potential for asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, source control measures (i.e., use of well-fitting cloth masks, facemasks, or respirators to cover a person's mouth and nose) are recommended for everyone in a healthcare facility, even if they do not have symptoms of COVID-19. Patients should be evaluated in a private room with the door closed. Healthcare personnel entering the room should use standard and transmission-based precautions, wear a facemask or respirator, and use eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield). Infection prevention guidance for healthcare facilities can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html.
- Diagnostic testing should be performed when a patient has signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or when a patient is a close contact to someone who has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. Guidance for safe specimen collection can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html.
    - Testing for SARS-CoV-2 is available through commercial labs or providers may request testing through the Georgia Public Health Laboratory (GPHL), which is available online at https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-online-testing-request
    - Additional information on testing for SARS-CoV-2 can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html
    - Patients can also self-refer to DPH Specimen Point of Collection Sites (SPOCS) or other commercial testing sites. Locations for DPH SPOCS can be found here: https://dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting, and patients can search for commercial testing locations here: https://dph.georgia.gov/castlight-location-finder
- Patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home and follow DPH isolation guidance, which can be found here: https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact.
- For information on how to manage patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, please see DPH resources:
    - Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/dph-return-work-guidance/download

- o Return to Work for Non-healthcare Personnel
  https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/dph-covid-19-return-work-guidance-after-covid-19-illness-or-exposure-persons-not/download
- o Return to School https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/return-school-guidance/download

COVID-19 reporting requirements
- All Georgia physicians, laboratories, and other healthcare providers are required by law to report both positive and negative results for COVID-19.
- Results can be reported through the State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (SendSS) – https://sendss.state.ga.us/sendss/login.screen

Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) associated with COVID-19 reporting requirements
- MIS-C is reportable in Georgia, and all suspect cases should be reported as soon as possible.
- Cases can be reported electronically through SendSS – https://sendss.state.ga.us/sendss/login.screen.
- Alternatively, providers may report by phone to their local health district office or by calling 404-657-2588 during business hours or 1-866-PUB-HLTH evenings and weekends.
- Reporting of suspected cases should not be delayed pending results of SARS-COV-2 test results.
- Additional information on MIS-C can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/mis-c/hcp/index.html

For more information
- CDC's guidance for healthcare professionals: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/guidance-hcp.html
- For the most up to date data on the pandemic: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/summary.html

Clinicians who have other questions, may call 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) and ask for a Medical Epidemiologist.

We protect lives.