

Date	April 9, 2020
To	All Medical Staff and Northern Health Clinical Leadership and Staff
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Re	COVID-19 Outbreak Response - Interim Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Protocol for Surgical Procedures Requiring Intubation during COVID-19 Pandemic - Adults and Older Adults

As part of the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the province developed an **interim** protocol for Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) for Surgical Procedures Requiring Intubation (applies to adults and older adults) http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/Algorithm_COVID-19_Surgery.pdf. This protocol does not apply to surgical procedures that do not require intubation or other aerosol generating medical procedures.

Within the guideline, all patients for surgical admission must be assessed for COVID-19 symptoms, specifically:

- fever \geq 38 degrees AND one of the following
- one or more of the following: cough shortness of breath diarrhea

PCR, NAT, or serologic SARS-CoV-2 tests are not recommended for screening asymptomatic patients due to the low clinical sensitivity and low positive predictive value in lower acuity patients and in low prevalence contexts.

Implementation of the IPC surgical procedures protocol may vary based on regional or local standard operating procedures. This protocol does not apply to maternity and pediatric patient populations. Should there be significant shortage of one or more components of PPE, Northern Health EOC approved alternative protocols and procedures may be considered, adapted and updated accordingly. These might include tactical operating procedures/routines such as allowing complete room air exchange after intubation before non-N95 Mask wearing staff and physicians enter the OR.

Clarification is required related to ventilation approaches in the absence of negative pressure operating rooms as is the time required for complete room air exchanges in each site. Basic principles highlighting the implications of adjusting ventilation in a formalized positive pressure built environment are being finalized and will be shared with administrative and physician leadership as soon as available to inform site level decisions.

For more information, contact Dr Jim Dunfield, Medical Lead, Surgical Services Program; Kim Ewen, Executive Lead, Surgical Services Program at Kim.Ewen@northernhealth.ca and/or Deanna Hembroff, Regional Manager, Infection Prevention and Control at Deanna.Hembroff@northernhealth.ca.