

Management of COVID-19 test results

Northern Health Medical Health Officers

NEGATIVE RESULT

COVID-19 is ruled out. Any specific self-isolation measures related to individual COVID-19 risk may be discontinued. Continue routine precautions to prevent COVID-19, such as social distancing and diligent hand hygiene. Depending on the patient's symptoms or alternative diagnosis, it may still be recommended that they stay home from work or school (e.g. due to influenza).

Patients can access negative test results directly by phoning the BCCDC Negative (1-833-707- 2792 Results line (1-833-707- 2792), which is staffed from 8:30AM to 4:30PM, seven days a week. People who have tested should wait 72 hours before calling the Negative Results line. The ordering provider may also choose to follow up with the patient to deliver the negative result.

POSITIVE RESULT

COVID-19 is confirmed. The result is sent to the ordering provider and to public health simultaneously. Public health follows up with all positive results as soon as possible. Follow-up by public health includes:

Case management

- Delivering the diagnosis
- Advice on self-isolation
- Active daily follow-up until 10 days from the onset of symptoms, in order to track clinical outcomes of COVID-19 cases and verify adherence to self-isolation

Repeat testing is not required. Self-isolation ends when acute symptoms have resolved and 10 days have passed from the onset of symptoms.

Contact management

- Contact identification
- Notification and evaluation of close contacts
- Advice on testing (if symptomatic and eligible)
- Advice on self-isolation
- Active daily follow-up until 14 days following their last exposure to the case, in order to detect new possible cases rapidly and verify adherence to self-isolation

A close contact is defined as a person who, while the case was symptomatic:

- provided care for the case, including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers, or who had other similar close physical contact (e.g., intimate partner) without consistent and appropriate use of personal protective equipment, OR
- who lived with or otherwise had close prolonged contact with the case, OR
- had direct contact with infectious body fluids of the case (e.g., was coughed or sneezed on) while not wearing recommended PPE, OR
- was an airplane crew member or a passenger seated within 2 metres of the case, OR
- has been identified by the local MHO as a close contact.

Public health does not follow up with non-close contacts, e.g. those who consistently used PPE, remained more than 2m away from the case, or had only brief interactions with the case.

Responsibilities of ordering provider and/or primary care provider

The ordering provider and/or primary care provider are responsible for the clinical care of the patient. They are not responsible for the public health management of the case and their contacts. They may choose to deliver the diagnosis and are encouraged to reinforce public health recommendations regarding self-isolation.