

Date: Tuesday January 4, 2022

Title: Updated CDC recommendations for duration of isolation for the general population

Situation: SARS-CoV-2 continues to impact our community and healthcare facilities. With the rise of the Omicron variant new recommendations for isolation and quarantine for the general public have been released by CDC.

Background:

Previous CDC recommendations - [Ending Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19: Interim Guidance \(cdc.gov\)](#) :

Key Points

- For most children and adults with symptomatic SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, infection, isolation, and precautions can be discontinued 10 days after symptom onset and after resolution of fever for at least 24 hours and improvement of other symptoms.
- For people who are severely ill (i.e., those requiring hospitalization, intensive care, or ventilation support) or severely immunocompromised, extending the duration of isolation and precautions up to 20 days after symptom onset and after resolution of fever and improvement of other symptoms may be warranted.
- For people who are infected but asymptomatic (never develop symptoms), isolation and precautions can be discontinued 10 days after the first positive test.
- Patients who have recovered from COVID-19 can continue to have detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA in upper respiratory specimens for up to 3 months after illness onset. However, replication-competent virus has not been reliably recovered and infectiousness is unlikely.

Assessment: On December 27 CDC published updated recommendations for isolation and quarantine for the general population. [CDC Updates and Shortens Recommended Isolation and Quarantine Period for General Population | CDC Online Newsroom | CDC](#) :

Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

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The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services announced changes to their isolation recommendations in response to the CDC update as well. [Steps to Take After Testing Positive or Exposure to COVID-19 \(ne.gov\)](#) (posters on the bottom of their site)



Iowa DHHS website directs to the CDC for guidance. Speaking with the Health Department directly they stated that they are advising to follow the updated CDC guidance for healthcare and the community. [Novel Coronavirus - Healthcare \(iowa.gov\)](#)

Recommendation:

The ID providers and Infection Prevention departments recommend to follow CDC guidance for the General Population.

Outpatient setting:

Patients should be instructed to follow the NE-DHHS forms provided on their website. This provides direction for quarantine/isolation for 5 days followed by 5 days of masking while in public. This is in line with the CDC recommendations that were released in December.

Inpatient setting:

At this time, no other health care facility in our service area is changing inpatient practices as the CDC has not updated guidance related to isolation and visitation guidance. We anticipate the CDC may update and we will continue to monitor CDC recommendations and community practice. Until then we recommend:

- 1) Follow existing CDC recommendations and NMHS policy of 10-20 days of isolation based on individual patient status, supplemental oxygenation needs, and immune-compromised status.
- 2) Visitor access to inpatient areas – At this time the recommendation is to maintain our existing visitor policy and restricting visitors into our facilities with respiratory symptoms and for 10 days following positive COVID test. This is in relation to the greater number of immune compromised patients that are cared for in the hospital.

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