



# Testing patients with suspected novel Corona virus (2019 nCoV) infection

The number of cases reported globally due to nCoV are rising. However, no confirmed cases have been reported in New Zealand by the MOH to date. **The situation is being monitored closely and information is being updated on a regular basis.**

**Any patient in primary care who is suspected of having 2019 nCoV infection and being considered for testing should be discussed and approved by the local Public Health team. Hospital inpatients should be discussed and approved by the Infectious Diseases Physician.**

## Suspect Case Definition as per NZ MOH

*Severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) in a person (i.e. an acute respiratory infection with history of fever or measured fever of  $\geq 38\text{ C}^\circ$  and cough) onset within the last 10 days requiring hospitalization AND a history of travel to Wuhan, Hubei Province, China and any other areas with sustained outbreaks in the 14 days prior to symptom onset.*

**OR**

*A close contact of a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV infection while that patient was symptomatic who develops acute respiratory illness of any degree of severity within 14 days of the contact.*

## Please Note:

- Pathlab will **NOT** be collecting the nasopharyngeal swabs required for 2019-nCoV testing.
- If testing approval is given the specimens **MUST be collected at the site where the patient has been assessed or as instructed by MOH.**
- There is **NO patient request testing** available. If a patient is concerned about 2019-nCoV infection, then they should be referred to their doctor or Public Health.
- **Currently, there is no established testing capacity for 2019 nCoV in NZ, although this is expected to change over the next few weeks. Any test request for 2019 nCoV that fits the testing criteria and has been approved by Public Health would need to be referred to overseas Laboratories or stored till further notice.**

## Specimen types: Swabs (if approved for testing by Public Health)

- 2 Viral Nasopharyngeal swabs should be sent for extended respiratory virus panel as well as for 2019 nCoV testing. The 2 swabs can be put in the same specimen bag, double bagged and clearly marked as "Corona virus testing" on the outside. **(HOSPITAL PATIENTS ONLY - other specimens i.e. from lower respiratory tract maybe tested on discussion with the Clinical Microbiologist).**
- Appropriate clinical information should be recorded on the request form: Patient identification information, Physicians name and contact information, Date and time of sample collection, Specimen type and tests requested, Clinical symptoms and relevant patient history (including travel and contact history, risk factors) and name of Public Health or Infectious Diseases Physician who approved the test
- Routine tests for acute pneumonia/pneumonitis including bacterial culture and tests for other respiratory viruses, including influenza should also be considered.



**Note: Guidance for Infection Control precautions and precautions for specimen collection is available on:**

[https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected-20200125](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected-20200125)

**Further resources for updated information:**

[https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/health\\_advice\\_for\\_health\\_professionals\\_novel\\_coronavirus\\_wuhan\\_2020\\_01\\_24\\_0.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/health_advice_for_health_professionals_novel_coronavirus_wuhan_2020_01_24_0.pdf)

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/01/phIn-guidance-on-laboratory-testing-for-2019-ncov-phIn-guidance-on-laboratory-testing-for-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov.pdf>

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus/laboratory-diagnostics-for-novel-coronavirus>

**Dr Vani Sathyendran, Clinical Microbiologist**

CLINICAL UPDATE

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