

# Precautions When Working with COVID-19 Patients

## To decrease your risk in caring for patients during this pandemic:

- Remember to phone ahead and ask the respiratory screening coordination note prior to your in-person visit.
- Please email [employeehealth@avowcares.org](mailto:employeehealth@avowcares.org) immediately if a patient has symptoms of COVID-19
  - Symptoms include dry cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, and fever.
  - Other respiratory symptoms may require differential decision-making. Please use Employee Health as your resource.
- Admitting nurses are to notify the Employee Health and Clinical Managers email distribution lists if a newly admitted patient has been tested for COVID-19 or if you feel symptoms would warrant testing.
- Nurses, complete an infection report in HCHB.
- Please add a Medical Examiner (ME) coordination note in HCHB, Physician's Protocol for ME case, and a Point Care Visit Alert.
  - The ME coordination note is necessary because positive COVID-19 cases are reported to the medical examiner.
  - Admitting nurses should also add the ME Protocol to the physician protocol field.
  - A Point Care Visit Alert referring to the ME note must be added (including date of the ME note, as usual).
  - A Point Care Visit Alert (PCVA) is needed to inform staff the patient has or is under investigation for COVID-19
  - Notification in the PCVA to inform staff should state:
    - Patient is positive or is a person under investigation for COVID-19. Staff should use contact, droplet and airborne precautions (gown, gloves, eyewear, and N95 or KN95 mask) until otherwise notified. Practicing social distancing of 6 feet or more, with fewer than 10 minutes of close up face-to-face (intimate space) exposure significantly decreases chances of exposure.
- If a COVID-19 test result is available, please send them to Employee Health and Dr. Nehrkorn.

- If results are not available, please inform Employee Health where testing has taken place if this is known (name of hospital, or which laboratory did the testing), patient name, date of testing.

**If you are providing nursing care to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients:**

- Use Personal Protective Equipment
  - Be sure to don (put on) your PPE prior to entering the home.
  - Gloves, N95 or KN95 masks (Make sure you were fit tested to the mask type you have!), gown, and goggles or face shield.
  - Eyeglasses do not count as goggles or eye protection.
- To the extent that you can, while providing appropriate care, maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet, and limit face-to-face contact (in the intimate personal space) to 10 minutes or less.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before putting gloves on and after taking them off, touching surfaces, including your cell phone.
- Avoid touching your face at all times, especially nose, mouth, and eyes, because the virus can easily enter through those areas.
- Carefully remove your PPE. Instructions are available from your managers or Employee Health if you have uncertainty about the correct way to do this.
- Wash your hands often.
- Sanitize your phone, pen, ID badge, and medical equipment between patients, and frequently if you are in a single location.
- Take only the minimum materials your need when caring for patients.
- Dispose of, and do not reuse, N95 or KN95 masks.
- Immediately notify employee health if you develop any symptoms of COVID-19.

Family teaching sheets about COVID-19 have been posted in the emergency alert section and Resources section of [www.avowcares.org](http://www.avowcares.org). You can also pick up printed copies from the Fountain View Room.