

UT Health SA Guidance

Evaluation of Patients for Elective Procedures after Lab-Confirmed COVID-19

Based on current CDC guidance, re-testing of patients is not indicated when patient had previously tested positive for COVID-19 by direct viral testing (e.g. PCR or viral antigen assay). Patients with confirmed **SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)** infection can be scheduled for elective procedures **after Transmission-Based Precautions (Isolation Precautions) are discontinued**. RNA fragments (not live virus) can be detected for weeks to months after infection. The decision to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions is made using a symptom-based strategy as described below (when patient is no longer a transmission risk). The time period depends on the patient's severity of illness and if they are severely immunocompromised.

Symptom-Based Strategy for Discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19

1. **Asymptomatic Patient** – Remained **asymptomatic** after positive viral diagnostic test (patient **not severely immunocompromised**): Transmission-Based Precautions can be discontinued when **10 days** have passed since date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.
2. **Symptomatic Patient (not hospitalized)** – category mild to moderate illness (not severely immunocompromised):
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without use of fever-reducing medications **and**
 - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved
3. **Symptomatic Patient (hospitalized)** – category severe to critical illness (not severely immunocompromised):
 - 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
 - Overall improvement in other symptoms
4. **Symptomatic or Asymptomatic Patient (when severely immunocompromised* or intubated)**:
 - 28 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (first positive test if asymptomatic) **and**
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without use of fever-reducing medications **and**
 - Overall improvement in other symptoms

***Defined criteria – severely immunocompromised/immunosuppressed:**

- being on chemotherapy for cancer
- hematopoietic stem cell or organ transplant recipient
- untreated HIV infection with CD4 T lymphocyte count < 200
- combined primary immunodeficiency disorder
- receipt of prednisone >20 mg/day for more than 14 days