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**December 23, 2020**

From the Office of Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health

## Updated: Enhanced Provider Protection Recommended

**This update replaces the notice distributed to you on December 10<sup>th</sup> by Southwestern Public Health.**

Due to the increasing cases of COVID-19 cases in our community, I am recommending that all healthcare providers use Contact/Droplet Precautions with all patients. Use gloves, eye protection and masking when providing direct care to all patients and not just those with respiratory symptoms. Gowns are to be used at your own discretion.

### COVID MANAGEMENT OF CASES QUICK FACTS:

#### Incubation Period

- averages 4-6 days; however, it can be up to 14 days with more than 97 per cent of people showing symptoms within 11.5 days of exposure.

#### Period of Infectiousness

- 2 days before symptom-onset until 10 days after symptom-onset, provided the person is afebrile and symptoms are improving. Those hospitalized with more severe illness or who are severely immunocompromised are considered infectious until 20 days after symptom-onset.
- If cases are asymptomatic the date of test collection is used to calculate infectious period.

#### Summary of Public Health Management of Cases

- Self-Isolation:
  - Cases are advised to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of symptom-onset. If a case requires medical attention, they are advised to wear a mask when leaving their home and notify their health care provider about their COVID-19 positive result.
- Ongoing Monitoring:
  - Cases will receive a call from Public Health within 24 hours of being identified as a case. Additional check-in calls are made daily, when possible or on day 5 and 10 of isolation, at a minimum.
  - Referrals to Ontario West Remote Monitoring Program or LHSC Paediatric COVID-19 Follow-Up Clinics are also made for clients who provide consent.

- Testing for Clearance:
  - A test-based approach for clearance is not recommended in the community setting.
  - For more information, refer to [COVID-19 Quick Reference Public Health Guidance on Testing and Clearance](#), p. 4.

### **Public Health Management of \*High-Risk Contacts:**

- Self-Isolation (Quarantine):
  - High-risk contacts are advised to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of their last contact with the case while the case was infectious.
  - High-risk contacts are discouraged from leaving the house to run errands or attend non-urgent appointments. If medical care is needed, the contact is advised to wear a mask when leaving their home and to notify their health care provider about their exposure.
- Ongoing Monitoring:
  - High-risk contacts will receive a call from Public Health within 24-48 hours of being identified as a contact. Additional check-in calls are made on day 7 and 14 post-exposure.
  - Contacts are advised to monitor for symptoms while in isolation and to notify public health if symptoms develop.
  - Contacts are advised to get tested for COVID-19 within the 14 days following last exposure to the case.
- COVID-19 Testing Recommendations for High-Risk Contacts:
  - Contacts who have had ongoing exposure to the case while they have been infectious, or who had similar acquisition exposures as the case, should be tested as soon as possible.
  - Contacts who were only exposed to the case and who do not share acquisition exposures should be tested at least 5-7 days after their exposure to the case.

*\*A high-risk contact is generally defined as an individual who had unprotected exposure to the case during the period of communicability FOR >15 minutes AT <2 metre distance. Members of households and congregate living settings are automatically considered a high-risk contact.*

For more information, visit: [Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario](#)  
Truly,

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