

GUIDANCE FOR MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMATIC HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Overview

Isolation helps prevent the spread of illness by reducing the number of people you could infect by staying home and avoiding others.

Individuals working in an Alberta Health Services (AHS) or Covenant Health setting (including all employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of AHS or Covenant Health including contracted service providers) follow the AHS or Covenant Health Attending Work Directive and [Return to Work Guide for Healthcare Workers](#), as applicable.

Other health care workers with symptoms of a respiratory viral infection are recommended to use an at-home rapid antigen test (RAT). These tests are available for free at pharmacies across the province. Follow the guidance below depending on the results of the rapid test.

Positive rapid test

Healthcare worker should isolate at home

- Stay home from work for a minimum of 5 days from symptom onset, OR until symptoms are improving and the healthcare worker is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, whichever is longer.
- When the healthcare worker returns to work, they should wear a mask at all times* when at work in indoor settings for a total of 10 days from the onset of symptoms. It is also very important to perform frequent and careful hand hygiene.

Negative rapid test

Healthcare worker should isolate at home

- Stay home from work and use a second RAT at least 24 hours after the first negative RAT.
- If the second RAT is negative, the healthcare worker can return to work when their symptoms improve, they are feeling well enough to resume normal activities and they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- When the healthcare worker returns to work they should wear a mask at all times* when at work in indoor settings for a total of 10 days from the onset of symptoms (even if the symptoms have improved or resolved). It is also very important to perform frequent and careful hand hygiene.
- If the second RAT is positive, follow the guidance for a healthcare worker with a positive rapid test.

* If an individual needs to remove their mask (e.g. changing a soiled mask, eating or drinking, etc.), then they should ensure that they are physically distanced from others when doing so.

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No rapid test

Healthcare worker should isolate at home

- Stay home from work for a minimum of 5 days from symptom onset, AND until symptoms are improving and healthcare worker is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, whichever is longer.
- When the healthcare worker returns to work they should wear a mask at all times* when at work in indoor settings for a total of 10 days from the onset of symptoms (even if the symptoms have improved or resolved). It is also very important to perform frequent and careful hand hygiene.