

# MEMORANDUM

<b>FROM:</b>	K. Pallav Kolli, MD Associate Chair, Quality & Safety	Christopher P. Hess, MD, PhD Professor and Chair
<b>DATE:</b>	April 14, 2020	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Isolation status and PPE use in patients with pending COVID-19 tests	

**Background:** Most patients who undergo COVID-19 RNA testing do so because they are symptomatic and COVID-19 infection is clinically suspected. These patients are placed under either “Respiratory Illness Evaluation without Negative Pressure” or “Novel Respiratory Isolation.” Each isolation status carries specific personal protective equipment (PPE) recommendations.

Radiology worklists now include a column that alerts technologists to the COVID-19 testing status of each patient, with separate flags for patients who a.) test positive or b.) have tests pending. These flags alert staff to check a patient’s isolation status and don appropriate PPE prior to any interactions with the patient.

More recently, some asymptomatic patients have been added to UCSF’s testing algorithm. At present, asymptomatic patients who undergo COVID-19 RNA testing belong to one of 4 groups:

- 1) Patients scheduled to undergo imminent bone marrow or solid organ transplant or organ donation
- 2) Patients admitted from congregate living situations such as skilled nursing facilities, and
- 3) Patients unable to provide a history of symptoms and no collateral available
- 4) Prior to discharge to certain facilities (LPPH, SNFs, etc.)

The isolation status of these asymptomatic patients with tests pending depends on when the test is sent.

- If the test is sent on admission, patients are put in isolation;
- If the test is sent after admission, no isolation precautions are instituted as long as the patient remains asymptomatic.

This has led to some confusion: most patients with pending COVID-19 tests will be under isolation but some patients with pending COVID-19 test will **NOT** be under isolation. This confusion is likely to increase in the next few days when COVID-19 testing in a broader range of asymptomatic patients is expected to begin.

**Guidance:** The table below is intended to provide guidance for radiology technologists asked to image patients who have been tested for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Test	Isolation Status	Interpretation	Action	PPE
<b>+</b>	<i>Respiratory Illness Evaluation without Negative Pressure OR Novel Respiratory Isolation</i>	COVID-19 Infected Patient	Consult radiologist for appropriateness of examination; Proceed if approved	EITHER <i>airborne + contact</i> OR <i>droplet + contact</i> depending on isolation status
<b>Pending</b>	<i>Respiratory Illness Evaluation without Negative Pressure OR Novel Respiratory Isolation</i>	Patient Under Investigation (PUI)	Consult radiologist for appropriateness of examination; Proceed if approved	EITHER <i>airborne + contact</i> OR <i>droplet + contact</i> depending on isolation status
<b>Pending</b>	None	Asymptomatic Patient	Confirm with bedside RN that patient should not be under isolation; Proceed if confirmed	Standard precautions + surgical mask