COVID-19 Returning to Work Following Respiratory Illness Policy

**OVERVIEW**

**Objective**
Detail the guidelines for employees with symptoms of an acute respiratory infection and employees without symptoms who have been diagnosed with COVID-19

**Policy Statement**
If an employee is sick with an acute respiratory infection, the employee should remain at home, returning to work per the identified guidelines.

**Scope**
(Underline) (Policy Applies to) UW Medicine

**Policy Team**
(Names & Titles)
John Lynch, MD, MPH
Jennifer Petriz
Kristi Aravena
Glenn Bieler
UW Medicine Infection Prevention & Control and Employee Health/UW Medicine EOC
Medical Technical Team

**GENERAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS**

If an employee is sick with an acute respiratory infection they should:
- Remain at home. An employee cannot work while ill with an acute respiratory infection.
- Notify their manager.
- If medical care is needed, contact their primary physician. If urgent care is needed, please call the urgent care clinic or emergency department before coming in.

**COVID-19 Testing**
- Employees who develop symptoms of acute respiratory infection should sign up for COVID-19 testing. Symptoms of an acute respiratory infection include the following symptoms: fever (> 100.4°F or 38°C), chills, sore throat, new or worsened shortness of breath, cough, runny nose, muscle aches, loss of sense of smell or taste, new or different headache, or gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea).
- Please note that at this time, asymptomatic staff may only be tested if instructed to do so following a high-risk exposure or per Infection Prevention & Control, Employee Health Team, or Public Health.
- To be tested, fill out our UW COVID-19 Testing Survey. The survey will ask for the employee identification number (EIN) and birthdate for identification. The EIN is on the back of employee ID badges or may be found in WorkDay.
- After the survey is complete and if the employee qualifies for testing, they will be contacted to schedule an appointment for one of our UW Medicine Employee COVID-19 Testing Clinics; they will identify where to go and when to arrive.
- If testing is not available in a timely fashion (same or next day), the employee should contact local Employee Health who can help expedite scheduling.
- The clinic tests employees for COVID-19 only.
- Please note that all testing is done by appointment only; no walk-ins will be accepted.
Employees who are ill and interested in testing at the SCCA/Fred Hutch Employee Clinic can click here SCCA Testing Survey.

Testing is not mandatory, but it is strongly encouraged if the employee has any of the symptoms described above.

If an employee’s test is positive, Employee Health will inform their manager that a staff member on their unit tested positive for COVID-19 without revealing identifying information. Employee Health will do their very best to maintain confidentiality when performing a contact tracing investigation, but in some cases, details that could identify the employee may need to be disclosed in order to detect other exposed individuals.

If an employee tests negative for COVID-19, they return to work after symptoms have improved and have no fever (without using fever-reducing medications like acetaminophen) for 24 hours.

If an employee tested positive for COVID-19 and had mild to moderate symptoms, and is not severely immunocompromised, they can return to work as follows:

- Remain under home isolation precautions for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset AND until at least 24 hours have passed since last fever (without using fever-reducing medications) AND their respiratory and GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) have improved
- In addition, when returning to work, employees must adhere to the Required and Extended use Masking and Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction Policies as applicable to their work setting and role.
- A repeat test is not recommended because it may remain positive even after the infection has resolved

If an employee tested positive for COVID-19 and is severely immunocompromised, they may return to work as follows:

- Discuss on a case by case basis with local Employee Health
- In addition, when returning to work, employees must adhere to the Required and Extended use Masking and Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction Policies as applicable to their work setting and role.

If an employee recently had symptoms concerning for COVID-19, but did NOT get tested for COVID-19, they can return to work as follows:

- Remain under home isolation precautions for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset AND until at least 24 hours have passed since their last fever (without using fever-reducing medications) AND their respiratory and GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) have improved
- In addition, when returning to work, employees must adhere to the Required and Extended use Masking and Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction Policies as applicable to their work setting and role.

If an employee tested positive for COVID-19 but does not have any symptoms, they may return to work as follows:

If tested positive for COVID-19 and does not have any symptoms, they should remain under home isolation precautions for 10 days since the date of their first positive COVID-19 test. If they develop symptoms during that period, they should contact their local Employee Health and see the recommendations above.

1“Severely immunocompromised” includes being on chemotherapy for cancer, having untreated HIV with CD4 count <200 or combined primary immunodeficiency disorder, or taking prednisone >20mg/day for more than 14 days. Other conditions such as advanced age or diabetes mellitus may pose a lower degree of immunocompromise and do
not clearly impact occupational health actions to prevent disease transmission (CDC).

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UW Medicine is responsible for:</th>
<th>Distributing this policy to staff.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Team is responsible for:</td>
<td>Ensuring this policy is up to date.</td>
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**AUTHORIZATION**

| Date Approved: | 8/20/2020 |
| Approved by:   | UW Medicine IP Team |

**COMMUNICATION PACKAGE**

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<tr>
<td>All Staff</td>
<td>Email (<a href="mailto:UWMtalk@uw.edu">UWMtalk@uw.edu</a>)</td>
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<td>Front Line Staff</td>
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<td>HR Team</td>
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<td>Policy Catalog</td>
<td>Forward approved policy to EOC Director’s office to be numbered and posted in EOC Policy Catalog <a href="mailto:eocdir@uw.edu">eocdir@uw.edu</a></td>
<td>EOC Centralized Admin (note taker at CL meeting) <a href="mailto:uwmeoc@uw.edu">uwmeoc@uw.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Medicine Intranet</td>
<td>Forward approved and numbered policy to Policy Lead (Adam Parcher) for posting</td>
<td>EOC Director’s Office</td>
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Document Owner(s): John Lynch, UW Med Infection Prevention team, UW Med EH Team, UW Med Tech Team

Web Address (URL):

**VERSION HISTORY**

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Revision Date</th>
<th>Description of Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>John Lynch</td>
<td>08.30.20</td>
<td>Updated: Time of isolation for employees with respiratory tract infection symptoms who do not get tested for COVID-19- extend from 24 hours w/o symptoms to 10 days with improving symptoms and no fever for 24 hours</td>
<td>UW Medicine Infection Prevention &amp; Control and Employee Health/UW Medicine EOC Medical Technical Team</td>
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FAQ for Employees with Symptoms of an Acute Respiratory Infection and Employees Without Symptoms Who Have Been Diagnosed with COVID-19

Updated: 08/30/2020
Owner(s)/Author(s): UW Medicine Infection Prevention & Control and Employee Health/UW Medicine EOC Medical Technical Team

I’m sick with an acute respiratory infection. What should I do?

- You should remain at home. You cannot work while ill with an acute respiratory infection.
- Call your manager to let them know.
- If you need medical care, you should contact your primary physician. If urgent care is needed, please call the urgent care clinic or emergency department before coming in.

Can I get tested for COVID-19?

- Employees who develop symptoms of acute respiratory infection, including the following symptoms (fever > 100°F or 38°C), chills, sore throat, new or worsened shortness of breath, cough, runny nose, muscle aches, loss of sense of smell or taste, new or different headache, or gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea), should sign up for testing.
- Please note that at this time, asymptomatic staff may only be tested if instructed to do so following a high-risk exposure or per Infection Prevention & Control, Employee Health Team, or Public Health
- If you would like to be tested, fill out our UW COVID-19 Testing Survey. The survey will ask for your employee identification number (EIN) and birthdate for identification. Your EIN is on the back of your ID badge or you can find it in Workday.
- After you complete the survey and qualify for testing, you will be contacted to schedule an appointment for one of our UW Medicine Employee COVID-19 Testing Clinics; they will tell you where to go and when to arrive.
- If testing is not available in a timely fashion (same or next day), please contact your local Employee Health who can help expedite scheduling.
- The clinic will test you for COVID-19 only.
- Please note that all testing is done by appointment only; no walk-ins will be accepted.

Employees who are ill and interested in testing at the SCCA/Fred Hutch Employee Clinic can click here SCCA Testing Survey.

Is testing for COVID-19 mandatory? No, but it is strongly encouraged if you have any of the symptoms described above.

Is testing confidential? If your test is positive, Employee Health will inform your manager that a staff member on their unit tested positive for COVID-19 without revealing identifying information. We will do our very best to maintain your confidentiality when performing a contact tracing investigation, but in some cases, details that could identify you may need to be disclosed in order to detect other exposed individuals.
I tested negative for COVID-19. When can I return to work? You may return to work after symptoms improved.

I tested positive for COVID-19 and had mild to moderate symptoms, and I am not severely immunocompromised. When can I return to work?

- You should remain under home isolation precautions for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset AND until at least 24 hours have passed since your last fever (without using fever-reducing medications) AND your respiratory and GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) have improved
- In addition, when you return to work, you must adhere to the **Required and Extended use Masking** and **Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction** Policies as applicable to your work setting and role
- A repeat test is not recommended because it may remain positive even after the infection has resolved

I tested positive for COVID-19 and I am severely immunocompromised. When can I return to work?

- Please discuss on a case by case basis with your local Employee Health
- In addition, when you return to work, you must adhere to the **Required and Extended use Masking** and **Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction** Policies as applicable to your work setting and role.

I recently had symptoms concerning for COVID-19, but I did NOT get tested for COVID-19. When can I return to work?

- You should remain under home isolation precautions for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset AND until at least 24 hours have passed since your last fever (without using fever-reducing medications) AND your respiratory and GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) have improved
- In addition, when you return to work, you must adhere to the **Required and Extended use Masking** and **Universal Eye Protection during Patient Interaction** Policies as applicable to your work setting and role

I tested positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms. When can I return to work?

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and do not have any symptoms, you should remain under home isolation precautions for 10 days since the date of your first positive COVID-19 test. If you develop symptoms during that period, please contact your local Employee Health and see the recommendations above.

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1“Severely immunocompromised” includes being on chemotherapy for cancer, having untreated HIV with CD4 count <200 or combined primary immunodeficiency disorder, or taking prednisone >20mg/day for more than 14 days. Other conditions such as advanced age or diabetes mellitus may pose a lower degree of immunocompromise and do not clearly impact occupational health actions to prevent disease transmission (CDC).