

UPDATED CASE DEFINITIONS FOR COVID-19

Attached are the updated Case Definitions for Covid-19 (updated on 6th January 2021). They have been adapted from the updated WHO case definitions for Covid-19. As the epidemiological situation within the country evolves and additional risks such as new, more transmissible variants emerge, coupled with increased visitors including tourists, there is a need to update guidance, and for healthcare workers, island taskforces and management of healthcare facilities and tourist establishments to be aware of and adhere strictly to these.

All healthcare providers should be familiar with the case definitions, and assess all patients accordingly. For **ALL** suspected or probable cases of the Covid-19, a sample **MUST** be taken for Covid-19 PCR. HPA has recently come across cases where individuals with symptoms compatible with Covid-19 clinical and epidemiological criteria have been treated at healthcare settings, but had not been tested for Covid-19. This has caused the infection to circulate undetected, leading to outbreaks. Healthcare providers must remain vigilant, and ensure no suspected or probable case is missed. Where possible, sample should be taken at the same sitting when patient is seen, to minimize missing a case or delay.

Managements of healthcare facilities, tourist establishments (resorts, guest houses, safaris, resorts under construction) and industrial areas must ensure that their healthcare providers, if present, are made aware of these requirements and provide them assistance to safely and quickly follow this guidance. In addition, managements must ensure that even in the absence of healthcare providers, any staff or casual worker or guest in their establishment who develops symptoms compatible with Covid (as referred to in this case definition) must be referred immediately for testing.

Please note that at this moment, HPA is not recommending rapid antigen tests or antibody tests for confirming diagnosis. These tests must only be performed according to HPA guidelines, and all results (positive and negative) must be reported to HPA.

HPA would also like to take this opportunity to remind all healthcare providers and managers their obligation to comply with reporting requirements for all notifiable diseases, especially Acute Respiratory Infections (ARIs) and Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI). All SARI cases must also have influenza testing performed as per protocol.

COVID-19: Case Definitions (as of 6th January 2021)	
<p>Suspected COVID-19 case is a person who fulfils criteria A or B or C below:</p> <p>A- A person who meets the clinical AND epidemiological criteria</p> <p>Clinical Criteria:</p> <p>AT LEAST ONE of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cough • fever • shortness of breath • sudden onset (new onset) of anosmia (loss of smell) or ageusia (loss of taste) in the absence of any other identified cause. <p>OR</p> <p>ANY TWO OR MORE of the following symptoms: Myalgia, headache, sore throat, runny nose, generalized weakness /fatigue, nausea/vomiting, diarrhoea, altered mental status. (Symptoms separated with slash (/) are to be counted as one symptom).</p> <p>Epidemiological Criteria:</p> <p>Any one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of travel to or residence or working in a location with risk of transmission* of COVID-19 during the 14 days prior to symptom onset. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who is a close contact of a traveler coming from an area with risk of transmission of COVID-19 <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past 14 days having visited or worked at a health care facility <p>B- A patient with severe acute respiratory illness (SARI: acute respiratory infection with history of fever or measured fever of $\geq 38\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$; AND cough; with onset within the last 10 days; AND requires hospitalization).</p> <p>C- Death in a person who meets the clinical AND epidemiological criteria.³</p>	<p>Probable COVID-19 case is a person who fulfils any of the criteria below:</p> <p>A. patient who meets clinical criteria AND is a contact of a probable or confirmed case, or linked to a COVID-19 cluster¹</p> <p>B. A suspected case with chest imaging showing findings suggestive of COVID-19 disease²</p> <p>C. Death, not otherwise explained, in a person who meets the clinical criteria AND was a contact of a probable or confirmed case or linked to a COVID-19 cluster¹</p> <p>¹A group of symptomatic individuals linked by time, geographic location and common exposures, containing at least one PCR confirmed case.</p> <p>²Typical chest imaging findings suggestive of COVID-19 include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest radiography: hazy opacities, often rounded in morphology, with peripheral and lower lung distribution • Chest CT: multiple bilateral ground glass opacities, often rounded in morphology, with peripheral and lower lung distribution • Lung ultrasound: thickened pleural lines, B lines (multifocal, discrete, or confluent), consolidative patterns with or without air bronchograms. <p>Confirmed case of COVID-19: is a person who fulfils any of the criteria below:</p> <p>A. A person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 by detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA (positive PCR test) in a clinical specimen irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.</p>
<p><i>*locations with risk of transmission include: countries, cities or islands with local or community spread of COVID-19; Islands and tourist establishments which receive international tourists such as tourist resorts, tourist guest house islands and safaris; islands which receive travellers from Greater Male' Area or receive travellers from other islands; islands under construction; people staying or working in closed residential settings such as drug rehabilitation centres, prisons and shelter homes for children, adults and disabled persons.</i></p>	

NOTE- PCR testing MUST be done in all suspected or probable cases of COVID-19.

- At this moment HPA does not recommend Antigen-RDTs for confirmation of COVID-19 infection. All antigen tests must be done according to HPA guidelines and results should be reported to HPA.
- Clinical and public health judgement should be used to determine the need for further investigation in patients who do not strictly meet the clinical or epidemiological criteria.

³Any death in a person under quarantine must be informed to HPA and must be tested for COVID-19. Any unexplained death in a city or island where there is local or community transmission of COVID-19 or in any tourist establishment or in any island under development must be informed to HPA and must be tested for COVID-19.

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