



# County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY  
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## Public Health Division

<b>Date:</b>	<b>January 23, 2020</b>
<b>To:</b>	<b>All Healthcare Providers in Santa Cruz County</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Gail Newel, MD, MPH, County Public Health Officer</b>

## Guidance for Santa Cruz County Clinicians

### Check List: Managing Patients who may have Novel Coronavirus (219-nCoV) Infection

#### 1. Identify patients who may have respiratory illness caused by 2019-nCoV

Healthcare providers should screen for travel history on all patients with potentially infectious disease, especially those with fever and acute respiratory illness. Place visible signage requesting visitors with a fever and recent international travel to notify a hospital staff member.

#### 2. Immediately isolate patients reporting fever ( $T > 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ or $> 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), lower respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and travel to Wuhan City, China within 14 days prior to illness

- Place surgical mask on patient
- Place patient in private room with door closed (ideally negative pressure airborne isolation room)

#### 3. Implement infection control procedures for healthcare workers

- Standard precautions
- Contact precautions (gloves, gown)
- Airborne precautions (N95 mask or PAPR)
- Eye protection

**Immediately report the patient to the Communicable Disease (CD) Unit at: 831-454-4114 (Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM) and 831-471-1170 (after hours and weekends).**

4.

The CD Unit will advise on the next steps.

#### 5. Collect specimens for laboratory diagnosis

See instructions below.

#### 6. Continue medical evaluation and empiric treatment for other causes of respiratory infection or pneumonia as clinically indicated

All patients with suspected nCoV-2019 infection should also be tested for common causes of respiratory infection and pneumonia as clinically indicated. **Testing for other respiratory pathogens should not delay specimen collection for nCoV-2019 testing.**

## 7. Discuss plan of care with the CD Unit prior to discharge

Continue patient isolation and infection control procedures as above.

### Specimen Collection Instructions

To increase the likelihood of detecting infection, CDC recommends the collection of specimens from each of these 3 categories: (1) lower respiratory (2) upper respiratory and (3) serum.

#### 1. Lower respiratory tract

- **Sputum:** Have the patient rinse the mouth with water and then expectorate deep cough sputum directly into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate at 2-8°C.

OR

- **Bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate, or pleural fluid:** 2-3 mL in a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate at 2-8°C.

#### 2. Upper respiratory tract

- **Nasopharyngeal swab AND oropharyngeal swab (NP/OP swab)** Use a synthetic fiber swab with plastic shaft. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts.

Nasopharyngeal: insert swab into nostril parallel to the palate, leave swab in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions. Swab both nasopharyngeal areas with the same swab.

Oropharyngeal: swab the posterior pharynx, avoiding the tongue.

Place each swab into a separate sterile tube, each with 2-3 mL of viral transport media. Do **NOT** combine NP/OP swab specimens; keep swabs in separate viral transport media collection tubes. Refrigerate at 2-8°C.

OR

- **Nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal aspirate:** collect 2-3 mL into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate at 2-8°C.

#### 3. Serum

- Collect 1 tube (5-10 mL) of whole blood in a serum separator tube (minimum 1 mL whole blood is needed for pediatric patients). Refrigerate at 2-8°C.

**Note: If specimens cannot be collected at the healthcare facility, do not refer the patient to another facility to obtain specimens. Instead, notify the CD Unit to discuss.**

**For guidance about specimen transport contact the CD Unit at 831-454-4114.).**

For biosafety reasons, it is not recommended to perform viral isolation in cell culture or initial characterization of viral agents recovered in cultures of specimens from a person under investigation for 2019-nCoV.

See CDC Interim Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines for Handling and Processing Specimens Associated with 2019-nCoV: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab-biosafety-guidelines.html>