Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)
Current criteria for testing

Patients meeting the following criteria should be assessed for 2019-nCoV:

- Travel to (including transit through) mainland China in the 14 days before the onset of illness,
- OR
- Close or casual contact in 14 days before illness onset with a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV
- AND
- Fever OR acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath or cough) with or without fever.

What to do if you have a patient who needs to be tested:

Isolate and apply infection control precautions for any patients with suspected 2019-nCoV

- place a surgical mask on the patient and isolate in a single room with the door closed
- use standard, contact and droplet precautions: a disposable fluid resistant gown, gloves, surgical mask, and eye protection while reviewing the patient
- immediately notify a WA Health Public Health Physician to discuss testing (see contact details below)
- patients with severe symptoms suggestive of pneumonia, e.g. fever and breathing difficulty, or frequent, severe or productive coughing episodes should be managed in a hospital in a negative pressure isolation room, phone ahead to the Emergency Department to advise

**IMPORTANT – Do not carry out any testing until you have discussed with a WA Department of Health Public Health Physician.**

If testing for 2019-nCoV is required

For patients with no respiratory symptoms or mild illness in the community

- collection of respiratory specimens is considered low risk
- use contact and droplet precautions: gown, gloves, surgical mask and eye protection
- collect nose and throat swabs, or nasopharyngeal swab, and serum blood sample “to save” when collecting respiratory specimens stand slightly to the side of the patient to avoid exposure to respiratory secretion; order other respiratory pathogens also
- use a single room with the door shut, the room does not need to be left empty after sample collection
• request a chest x-ray if clinically warranted, ring ahead to notify radiology and ensure the patient is masked.

For patients with **severe symptoms** suggestive of pneumonia

**IMPORTANT:** Patients with these symptoms should be managed in hospital, in a negative pressure isolation room

• use airborne precautions, including a negative pressure room if available; otherwise, use a single room from which air does not circulate to other areas, keep the door closed and leave it vacant for at least 30 minutes afterwards.
• contact and airborne precautions include: gown, gloves, eye protection (goggles or face shield) and P2/N95 respirator which should be fit checked
• specimens as above AND collection of sputum for PCR

**Where to send samples**

• samples can be sent to Pathwest via any pathology laboratory with an urgent request for 'respiratory virus panel and novel coronavirus'; specify the travel history and public health advice
• specimen collection is available at some PathWest collection centres – call ahead.

**2019-nCoV is URGENTLY NOTIFIABLE BY PHONE:** Call your local public health unit and speak to the Public Health Physician

**Public Health Unit contact details:**

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<tr>
<th>Metro</th>
<th>Kimberley</th>
<th>South West</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9222 8588 / 1300 MCDCWA</td>
<td>9194 1630</td>
<td>9781 2350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfields 9080 8200</td>
<td>Midwest 9956 1985</td>
<td>Wheatbelt 9690 1720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Southern 9842 7500</td>
<td>Pilbara 9174 1660</td>
<td>After hours/OnCall 9328 0553</td>
</tr>
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For more detailed information see the [Novel Coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) CDNA National Guidelines for Public Health Units](#)