



DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Bacha Khan Medical Complex / Gajju Khan Medical College-MTI, Swabi



Phone: +92-938-280216

Fax # +92-938-280215

Email: bkmc.swabi@gmail.com

January 21th 2022

COVID-19 HOSPITAL POLICY 2022

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: -

Q1 **WHAT IS CONSIDERED CLOSE CONTACT WITH COVID-19?**

A1 It is defined as contact for >15 minutes over 24 hours at less than 6 feet distance.

Q2. **WHICH DIAGNOSTIC TEST IS BETTER FOR THE OMICRON VARIANT? IS IT PCR OR RAPID ANTIGEN?**

A2. PCR is more reliable overall. Rapid tests are 50-80% sensitive in those with symptoms. But sensitivity decreases to 30-60% in those persons that are infected with COVID-19 but have no symptoms.

Q3. **HOW DO YOU COUNT THE DAYS WHEN CALCULATING PERIOD OF ISOLATION?**

A3. Day of symptoms, or day of positive test in case of no symptoms, is considered Day 1. And return on duty on Day 8.

A. **EXPOSURE CATEGORY & WORK RESTRICTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOSPITAL STAFF AFTER EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 PERSON.**

See Table 1: -

Healthcare Worker Personal Protective Equipment Status	Exposure Category of Risk	Work Restrictions
Not wearing mask	High	<p>No need to quarantine at home. However, obtain COVID-19 PCR test. HCW can go about his/her normal duties. <u>However, for next 14 days:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCW must monitor themselves for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. • Check temperature twice daily and remain alert for respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (rhinitis, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath.)



DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Bacha Khan Medical Complex / Gajju Khan Medical College-MTI, Swabi



Phone: +92-938-280216

Fax # +92-938-280215

Email: bkmc.swabi@gmail.com

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If symptoms develop, he/she must immediately get COVID-19 testing. If rapid test is positive, no need for PCR. If rapid test is negative, confirm with PCR. • Wear mask at all times at work. (This should be the practice for entire duration of pandemic) • Wear mask at home with family. • Practice frequent hand hygiene. (This should be normal practice of all HCWs at work irrespective of pandemic) • Maintain social distancing <p>Avoid duty rooms, staff lounges, cafeteria or social gatherings where HCW may eat/drink with others</p>
Wearing all recommended PPE with surgical facemask instead of N-95 during aerosol generating procedure	Medium	<p>No need to quarantine at home. No need for Covid 19 PCR test. Follow the above mentioned precautions</p>
Wearing all recommended PPE except gown or gloves.	Low	

- For those who had **high risk exposure but are asymptomatic**, they will get tested and continue to perform their duty while waiting for their PCR result.
- For those who had **high risk exposure and are symptomatic too**, they will get tested immediately, then go off duty, isolate at home while waiting for their PCR result.
- COVID-19 PCR result
 - If negative continue/return to duty with all the recommended SOP's.
 - If positive follow the table 2 recommendations'.



DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
 Bacha Khan Medical Complex / Gajju Khan Medical College-MTI, Swabi



Phone: +92-938-280216

Fax # +92-938-280215

Email: bkmc.swabi@gmail.com

B. Work Restriction Recommendations for Hospital Staff with SARS-CoV-2 Infection

See Table 2

Table 2: Recommendations for Healthcare Workers with COVID-19 Infection

Stable Staffing Situation	Contingency or Crisis* Situation where there is absenteeism and shortage of staff due to COVID-19 infection.
Can return to duty after 7 days' isolation is completed if improving symptoms and no fever since 2 days. No need for repeat testing.	Can return to duty after 5 days' isolation completed if improving symptoms and no fever since 2 days. No need for repeat testing.

*20% of the staff in isolation or there is staffing shortage in the department.

C. COVID TESTING POLICY FOR THE SURGICAL PATIENT: -

PCR for SARs-2 can be falsely negative in up to 30% of cases. The rapid antigen tests are even less reliable. Therefore, droplet precautions (surgical mask and eye covering) should be used by OR staff for operative cases. In case of an aerosol-generating procedure, health care providers within the room should wear an N95 mask, eye protection, gloves and a gown.

Emergency surgery should NOT be delayed while waiting for COVID-19 test result.

In case of elective surgery, the following protocol should be followed:

a. COVID SCREENING VERBAL QUESTIONNAIRE: -

1. This should be administered to all surgical candidates
 - Have you recently been diagnosed with COVID-19? If yes, when?
 - Have you recently been tested for COVID-19? If yes, when? What was the result?
 - Do you believe that you have had close contact with a person or family member who currently has or has recently had COVID-19? If yes, when?
 - Do you have fever, rhinitis, sore throat, cough, body aches or shortness of breath?



DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Bacha Khan Medical Complex / Gajju Khan Medical College-MTI, Swabi



Phone: +92-938-280216

Fax # +92-938-280215

Email: bkmc.swabi@gmail.com

2. If verbal screening is positive for symptoms or close contact, obtain SARS-2 PCR test.
3. If verbal screening positive for recent COVID-19 infection, surgery can be performed after completion of ≥ 15 days from the day of onset of symptoms or date of positive test, whichever is earlier, if no fever for the last 3 days and symptoms are improving.
4. Repeat PCR testing is NOT required to perform surgery if COVID-19 was diagnosed within the past 60 days. After 60 days, standard pre-operative testing protocol applies.

b. STANDARD PRE-OPERATIVE TESTING PROTOCOL: -

1. Patients who are to undergo a surgical procedure must obtain PCR testing for SARS-2. (Pre-operative Rapid Antigen testing cannot be recommended at present). These surgical procedures include:
 - Elective surgeries and procedures that require general anesthesia.
 - Elective labor inductions, elective C-sections, endoscopy, cardiology Cath lab, TEE, interventional radiology, MRI, pulmonary PFT and Sleep Lab).
 - Tracheostomies
2. Test should be scheduled within a period of 3 days (72 hours) before the elective surgery.
3. To minimize risk, patients should be *advised* to self-quarantine prior to the procedure, if possible, at minimum from the date of the test, but optimally 14 days prior to the expected procedure date.
4. If for some reason, surgery is delayed and could not be performed on the scheduled day, a negative PCR test should be considered valid for 5 days, so if it was done on a Monday, it will be considered valid till Friday, with no need to repeat test, if the patient has reported no symptoms in the interim.
5. A negative PCR test should be considered valid for 15 days in case of serial procedures such as wound debridement and staged procedures, serial ophthalmologic surgeries, serial ECTs, if the patient has reported no symptoms in the interim.



DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
Bacha Khan Medical Complex / Gajju Khan Medical College-MTI, Swabi



Phone: +92-938-280216

Fax # +92-938-280215

Email: bkmc.swabi@gmail.com

D. COVID-19 POLICY FOR THE INFECTED PATIENT: -

1. Emergency treatment or surgery should not be withheld or delayed due to COVID-19 positive status or while awaiting results of COVID test.
2. Immediately isolate COVID-19 patient in designated COVID unit.
3. Evaluate whether patient can be safely discharged to home on isolation precautions.
4. Manage COVID-19 as per latest guidelines.
5. Primary team must continue to follow patient in COVID Unit.
6. De-isolate patient after 10 days of start of symptoms or from the day of positive Covid 19 PCR in case of asymptomatic patient. No need for repeat testing.
7. In case of asymptomatic patients, de-isolate after 10 days from the day of the positive test result, if no new symptoms have developed.
8. In case of those patients who contracted COVID-19 and have pending/delayed surgery, repeat PCR test is not needed for 60 days after COVID-19 infection.
9. COVID-19 PCR may remain positive for many weeks even though the patient is not infectious and the virus has become non-replicative. This is why repeat testing is not recommended for de-isolation.
10. Counsel patient and family regarding measures for the prevention of COVID-19.

CHAIRMAN

**Infection Control Committee
GKMC/BKMC-MTI Swab**

Reference:

Department of Infectious Diseases SMBBIT & Civil Hospital Karachi.