

HEALTH ADVISORY



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

REGION IV PUBLIC HEALTH

Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum
counties and Cowlitz Tribe

To: Physicians and other health care providers

Please distribute a copy of this information to each provider in your organization.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to the following Region IV health officers:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH

Clark County Public Health, 564.397.8182

Skamania County Community Health, 509.427.3850

Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, 360.414.5599

Wahkiakum County Health & Human Services, 360.795.6207

Steven Krager, MD, MPH

Clark County Public Health, 564.397.8182

Skamania County Community Health, 509.427.3850

Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, 360.414.5599

Wahkiakum County Health & Human Services, 360.795.6207

Alert categories:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.

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Summary

Washington has flattened the curve but continues to see community transmission of COVID-19. We are now recommending that providers test all patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as early in their illness as possible. Rapid tests have demonstrated a higher rate of false negative results compared to PCR tests. Please report positive COVID-19 results to your local health department immediately and report negative results to Washington Department of Health (DOH). We are not recommending use of antibody tests for clinical decisions, as there are concerns about validity of available tests as well as uncertain correlation between a positive test and immunity.

COVID-19 Testing Criteria

As physical/social distancing measures ease statewide, we expect that cases of COVID-19 will rise. To control community transmission, we recommend providers test **all patients** who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 regardless of age or health status as early on in their illness as possible. This will allow public health actions such as isolation and quarantine to happen quickly and potentially disrupt transmission. Symptoms of COVID-19 include cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, rigors, myalgias, headaches, sore throat and loss of taste or smell.

See further guidance from DOH here:

[Interim COVID-19 Testing Guidance for Healthcare Providers](#)

If supplies allow, consider testing asymptomatic close contacts of a known case (if a close contact tests negative, these individuals still need to remain in quarantine for 14 days after their last date of exposure) and exposed individuals in an outbreak in congregate settings (long term care, homeless shelters, jails/prisons meat packing plant, etc).

Please call or fax your local health department (see numbers below) immediately upon confirmation of a positive COVID-19 lab. Public health relies on our local providers to report positive results as quickly as possible. Please fax negative results to DOH at 206.364.1060. This will help us understand the volume and distribution of testing.

If COVID-19 is being considered, whether testing is performed or not, provide the following guidance documents to patients, and emphasize isolation for ill persons and self-quarantine for exposed contacts.

- [Patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19](#)
- [Patients who were exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 case](#)
- [Unexposed patients with COVID-19 symptoms](#)

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DOH is asking health care providers to complete a survey to better understand access and barriers to SARS-CoV-2 testing in the community. This survey is meant only for licensed practicing professionals who might order SARS -CoV-2 PCR testing for their patients. [Please access the survey here.](#)

Please ensure that 100 percent of your COVID-19 lab samples are submitted with the patient's address as well as contact information (phone and email). More than 55 percent of lab results are submitted to DOH with incomplete or missing contact information.

Point of Care or Rapid Testing and False Negative Results

Molecular based rapid or point of care (POC) tests have demonstrated a higher rate of false negatives compared to PCR based tests. Negative POC tests in patients with a high suspicion of COVID-19 should be followed by a PCR test. False positive rates in both types of tests are reported to be low.

Serologic/Antibody Testing

Several antibody tests have been granted emergency use authorization from the FDA, however validation of these tests has been limited. As seen in the table below, the positive predictive value of a test is highly dependent on the prevalence of the disease within a community. At times of lower community prevalence of the disease, a test with even a high sensitivity and specificity would have a high number of false positive tests. Prevalence of COVID-19 in Washington is likely below 3 percent. It has also not been demonstrated that a positive antibody test demonstrates immunity to SARS-CoV-2. For these reasons we are not recommending clinical use of antibody testing at this time.

PREVALENCE	SENSITIVITY	SPECIFICITY	PPV	NPV
2%	99	99	66	100
	95	99	66	99.9
	95	96	33	99.9
5%	99	99	84	99.9
	95	99	83	99.9
	95	96	56	99.7
20%	99	99	96	99.7
	95	99	96	99.7
	95	96	86	98.7

Outbreak Update

The outbreak of COVID-19 has peaked in Washington but community transmission continues. As of April 30, 2020 there are 14,327 cases of COVID-19 confirmed in Washington state and 814 deaths.

For up to date information about the Washington COVID-19 outbreak, visit: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus> .

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Additional information is also available on the CDC's COVID-19 website,
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Thank you for your partnership.

Local health jurisdiction	Phone	Fax
Clark County Public Health	564.397.8182	564.397.8080
Cowlitz County Health Department	360.414.5599	360.425.7531
Skamania County Community Health	509.427.3850	509.427.0188
Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services	360.795.6207	360.795.6143

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