

## COVID-19 (caused by SARS-CoV-2): *What you need to know*

### What is SARS-CoV-2? What is COVID-19?

The family of coronaviruses includes at least 7 different viruses that can infect humans. The most common ones are seasonal – 229E, NL63, OC43, HKU1 – causing upper respiratory symptoms like runny nose, congestion, cough, fever, malaise, sore throat and headache. These are frequently seen in humans. The three less common coronaviruses that can infect humans are SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2. These have been associated with outbreaks and genetic similarity suggested single emergence from animal reservoir. While these viruses emerged from a bat reservoir, there has been evidence of person-to-person transmission. COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2.

### When should I consider COVID-19 disease in a patient?

Patients meeting the following criteria should be considered people under investigation (PUI). At Lee Health, EPIC will prompt a travel alert for patients who have traveled from China.

Clinical features and epidemiologic risk		
Clinical Features	&	Epidemiologic Risk
Fever <b>or</b> signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath)	AND	Any person, including health care workers, who has had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed-2019-nCoV patient within 14 days of symptom onset
Fever <b>and</b> signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath)	AND	A history of travel from affected geographic areas* (see below) within 14 days of symptom onset
Fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza)	AND	No source of exposure has been identified

\*China, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea

Identification of a PUI at a Lee Health facility requires immediate airborne and contact precautions and contact of the infection prevention on call phone 239-223-9676 for further guidance (See **Lee Health Clinician Workflow for Person Under Investigation (PUI)**). Notification of the Lee County health department (LCHD) should occur immediately (by Infection Prevention department) and samples for investigation *if directed by LCHD* (see below) will be facilitated by infection prevention.

1. Nasopharyngeal swab in viral transport media
2. Oropharyngeal swab (posterior pharynx) in viral transport media
3. Serum in serum separator tube – 5-10mL for children and adults, 1mL for small infants
4. (If patient has severe lower respiratory symptoms) Sputum in sterile specimen cup or BAL in sterile specimen cup

All specimens are to be labeled and hand delivered to the laboratory – DO NOT PLACE SPECIMENS IN PNEUMATIC TUBE SYSTEM.

## **Will the Respiratory Viral Panel (RVP) detect 2019-nCoV?**

The RVP performed at Lee Health laboratories detects the 4 common human coronaviruses but it does not detect SARS-CoV-2 causing COVID-19. Currently only the CDC and state health departments have PCR testing available to detect SARS-CoV-2.

## **How can I protect myself when working with sick people?**

Hand hygiene and appropriate use of PPE are vital to protecting healthcare workers. All patients with respiratory symptoms should be provided a mask to wear upon entry to Lee Health facilities per Infection Prevention policy S11 00 840. When a patient is identified as a PUI for COVID-19, airborne and contact precautions (in addition to standard precautions) should be instituted requiring all people entering the room to wear gown, gloves, eye protection, and respirator mask. These patients should be in AIIR rooms. There will be a log kept of entry into PUI rooms and visiting should be minimized (visitors are not fit tested for respirator use).

## **What is Lee Health doing to obtain information about COVID-19?**

Lee Health infection prevention department is monitoring information from the CDC, Florida Department of Health and Lee County Health Department daily to assure that our procedures and processes are current and that information is passed to providers and staff in a timely manner. Weekly updates are provided through email and the infection prevention website on IntraLee is updated as needed. Infection Preventionists and medical directors are available for consultation around the clock to support staff and providers. The on call phone number is 239-223-9676.