

Infection Control Update – Guidelines for Discontinuation of Transmission Based Precautions
and Retesting for Patients who have recovered from COVID-19

Update August 3, 2020

The CDC has issued updated guidance on the Discontinuation of Transmission-Based precautions for patients with COVID-19 infection¹. Although SARS-CoV2-RNA PCR testing may remain positive for prolonged periods after initial infection this does not necessarily represent shedding of live, infectious virus. Accumulating evidence supports ending isolation and precautions for persons with COVID-19 using a symptom-based strategy and a retesting strategy is no longer recommended.

For COVID-19 patients hospitalized at UConn Health, the current recommended duration for Transmission-Based Precautions is 20 days from the date of the first positive test. Repeat testing is *not needed* to discontinue COVID-19 precautions among hospitalized patients.

Symptom/Time-Based Strategy for Discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions²

General Criteria for Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions for Hospitalized Patients³

- At least 20 days have passed *since the first positive SARS-COV-2 RNA PCR test and*
- At least 24 hours have passed *since last* fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

Patient on transmission based precautions for another indication (ex. *C. difficile*, MRSA) the patient can transition from COVID-19 precautions to that of the other organism of concern.

Important: Prior to discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions for a patient who tested positive for COVID-19 the **Department of Epidemiology must be called to review the case and make final approval for discontinuation of precautions**. Epidemiology can be reached through the Hospital Operator.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>

² Select patients with mild illness or asymptomatic patients who test positive for SARS-CoV-2 may be eligible for discontinuation of Transmission Based precautions 10 days after the first positive SARS-COV-2 RNA PCR test on a case by case basis. Please call the Department of Epidemiology to review the case to determine whether precautions can be discontinued prior to 20 days post-test.

³ Patients with severe immunocompromising conditions (stem cell or solid organ transplant recipients, Immunosuppressive drugs (ex. cancer chemotherapy, chronic steroids, TNF alpha inhibitors, immunomodulators), Inherited immunodeficiency, HIV Infection with CD4 count < 200) should be handled on a case-by-case basis with consultation from Infection Control/Infectious Diseases

Repeat testing for SARS-CoV-2 among patients with a prior positive test after discontinuation of Transmission Based Precautions

For persons previously diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who remain asymptomatic after recovery, *retesting is not recommended within 3 months (12 weeks) after the date of symptom onset for the initial COVID-19 infection* in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Patients who are asymptomatic and admitted within 12 weeks after a positive test will not be retested on admission or prior to a procedure. Individuals within 21 days of a positive test should be managed using COVID-19 precautions. Asymptomatic patients who present for admission or pre-procedure testing > 12 weeks after their initial positive test will be retested in accordance with current procedures. Please review the attached table and testing algorithm for details.

For persons who recovered from COVID-19 and develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the 12 weeks after the date of initial symptom onset, if an alternative etiology cannot be identified, then the person may warrant retesting. Consultation with Infectious Diseases is recommended. Isolation is recommended during this evaluation.

TESTING ADMISSIONS - COVID 19
(with previously known COVID-19 status)
(Update August 3, 2020)

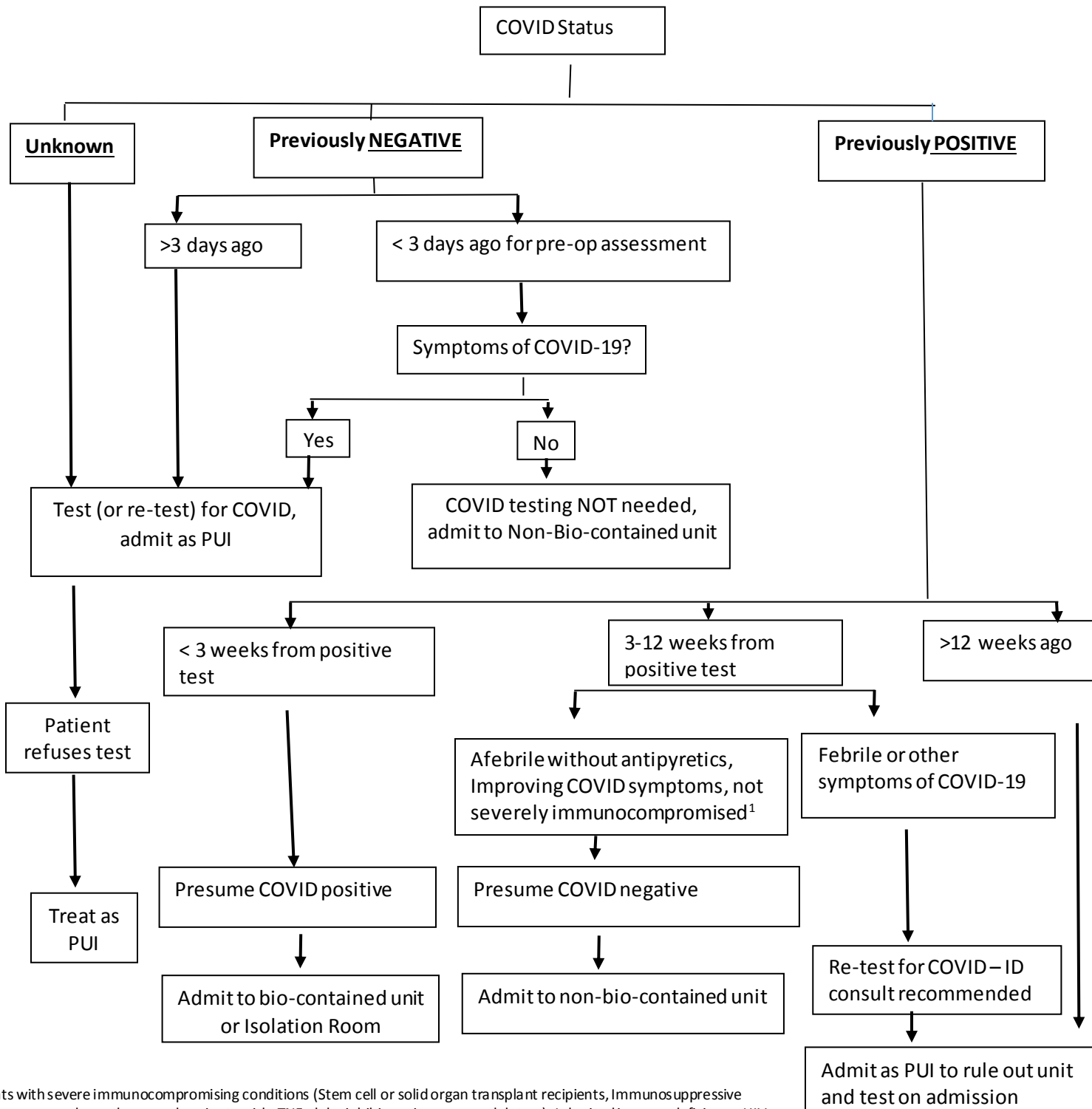
Known COVID Status	Time Frame	COVID-19 Symptoms	Test on Admission	Precautions/Floor Type ¹
+	<3 weeks	N/A	No	COVID Positive
+	3-12 weeks	Yes	Yes ²	PUI
+³	3-12 weeks	No	No	COVID Negative
+	>12 weeks	N/A	Yes	PUI
-	Within 72 hours prior to admission	No	No	COVID Negative
-	Within 72 hours prior to admission	Yes	Yes	PUI

¹Patients who are COVID-Positive or those who are PUI with test result pending should be cared for using COVID-19 precautions (Gown, Gloves, Eye Protection, N-95 respirator)

²Consider alternative causes of fever and other symptoms. Infectious Diseases Consult recommended when considering retesting within the 12-week interval

³Patients with severe immunocompromising conditions (Stem cell or solid organ transplant recipients, Immunosuppressive drugs (ex. cancer chemotherapy, chronic steroids, TNF alpha inhibitors, immunomodulators), Inherited immunodeficiency, HIV Infection with CD4 count < 200) should be handled on a case-by-case basis with consultation from Infection Control/Infectious Diseases

COVID-19 Admission Testing Guidelines UConn Health (Update August 3, 2020)



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