

Points to Note for Persons who Tested Positive Arrangements for persons pending admission to hospitals or isolation facilities

Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated on 16 May 2022)

Telephone hotline added and designated clinics activated for confirmed patients pending admission to isolation facilities

1. What are the points to note for infected persons with no or mild symptoms?

Infected persons with no or mild symptoms should stay calm while waiting for admission. They should continue to monitor their physical conditions, and there is no need to panic. Although overseas experience shows that most adults infected with the Omicron mutant strain develop milder symptoms than those with the Delta mutant strain, the elderly, chronic patients and children may still develop more severe symptoms and complications. COVID-19 vaccines can reduce the possibility of hospitalisation and serious infections, and are crucial in the lowering of severe cases or even deaths.

As infected persons may need to wait for a longer time before admission can be arranged, they should take personal protective measures by performing hand hygiene regularly and observing cough manners to reduce the risk of virus transmission as far as practicable during the period. If household conditions are permissible, infected persons should stay in their own room and close the door, and avoid face-to-face contact, dining and sharing personal items with other household members. They should wear well-fitted surgical masks properly whenever they leave the room.

As for environmental hygiene, it is recommended to keep the place well ventilated by keeping windows open as far as feasible. Daily cleaning of the household environment with disinfection using 1 in 49 diluted household bleach should be conducted. If toilets are shared, cleaning and disinfection should be done immediately after every use. About half a litre of water should be poured in each floor drain outlet at least once per week.

2. Can infected persons go out when they are waiting for admission?

Infected persons should make every effort to stay home and avoid going out when they are waiting for admission. If going out is strictly necessary (e.g. for seeking medical attention), they should take personal protective measures and use point-to-point transport as much as possible.

3. What should one do when symptoms develop?

The Government understands that certain infected persons may develop symptoms while waiting for admission. To cater for the medical needs of these persons, the Hospital Authority has established a hotline to address enquiries for persons in need and offer medical advice. The Hospital Authority has also launch designated clinics to assist in the handling of infected persons with milder conditions, so that they may receive appropriate diagnosis and treatment. For arrangement regarding designated taxi fleet to provide free transport to people contracted with COVID-19 to and from designated clinics, please refer to <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202202/16/P2022021600595.htm>.

Please refer to https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/healthadvice_testpos_ENG.pdf for conditions or symptoms that one should go to an Accident and Emergency (A&E) facility directly.

4. What should one do when self-tested positive through using rapid test kits?

Rapid antigen tests are designed to directly detect virus proteins in respiratory specimens. There are rapid test kits from different manufacturers currently available in the market. They are easy to use, and the results are usually available within 30 minutes. When using rapid test kits, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the

result properly. It is advisable to record the result by taking a photo immediately after reading the test. Citizens should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and minimise non-essential items in the specimen collection area. While taking the respiratory specimen, they should observe personal and environmental hygiene and do so in a well-ventilated place. If collecting the specimen at a place in the absence of other persons is not possible, please keep a distance of at least 2 metres from other people. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution. For metallic surfaces, 70 per cent alcohol can be used to disinfect the area.

Please also refer to the press release "Selecting and using rapid antigen tests" (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202202/27/P2022022600796.htm>) and the thematic webpage on "Rapid Antigen Tests" (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html>).

5. Is there a telephone hotline for confirmed patients pending admission to isolation facilities?

The Hospital Authority operates a telephone hotline 1836 115 from 9 am to 5 pm every Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays) to answer enquiries on medical information and provide infection control advice for people upon confirmed infection.

6. What are the designated clinics for confirmed cases of COVID-19?

To strengthen community support for confirmed patients and implement a triage system to prioritise services for patients in critical condition, the Hospital Authority activates designated clinics for confirmed cases of COVID-19 to help provide diagnosis and treatment for confirmed patients in the community presenting with relatively mild symptoms of infection (e.g. fever, cough, sore throat), especially high risk patients (including the elderly aged 70 or above, children aged 5 or below, women at 28 or more weeks of pregnancy, and immunocompromised patients such as organ transplant recipients and those with immune system disorders or long-term use of immunosuppressive drugs) requiring medical advice and treatment to soothe their symptoms. For more details, please refer to

https://www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/covid-19/designated_clinic_en.pdf.

Other relevant information

7. How should one take care of the daily necessities when pending admission to a hospital or community isolation facilities?

You need to stay in the place of residence when pending admission to a hospital or isolation facility. It is preferable that you stay in your own room. Keep the door closed and avoid face-to-face contact with other household members as far as feasible. Wear a well-fitted surgical mask properly when you need to leave your room. Any other person(s) (e.g. friends, relatives and persons not living together) should not enter your room or place of residence. You should avoid having meals or sharing personal items with other household members.

You are required to make your own arrangements for basic daily necessities and/or food, such as by friends and relatives not under quarantine or ordering online / through telephone (you are advised to use contactless payment methods). Nevertheless, persons delivering these items should leave them at your door (e.g. a chair outside your door) and are not allowed to enter your home to reduce the risk of them being exposed to infection. You should also avoid having face-to-face contact with them. If you cannot make arrangements for your daily necessities, please contact the 1833 019 Hotline.

8. How should one handle household garbage?

Garbage should be well wrapped and tied, and preferably double bagged to avoid leakage and passed to household member who is not infected to help with disposal. The household member needs to wear well-fitted surgical mask when disposing the garbage.

Perform hand hygiene afterwards.

9. When can the relevant persons leave home and continue with their daily activities?

If persons pending admission are eventually admitted to hospitals or isolation facilities, they will be discharged from hospitals or deemed to have completed isolation in accordance with relevant conditions after being treated and isolated. However, as the capacity of relevant facilities still cannot meet the demand at present, certain persons pending admission may not be sent to hospitals or isolation facilities in a timely manner.

If persons pending admission have not been sent to hospitals or isolation facilities on Day 14 after obtaining a positive nucleic acid test result (the day following testing or collection of sample is counted as Day 1; if there is no such testing or collection record, the day on receiving positive nucleic acid test result is counted as Day 1), they may conduct a test including Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). If the result is negative, relevant persons no longer need to be isolated, they may leave home and continue with their daily activities. If the result is positive, relevant persons should continue waiting at home and undergo daily RAT until a negative result is obtained. Only by then can they leave home and continue with their daily activities. Relevant persons will be recorded as having recovered from COVID-19 on the government system.

Regarding criteria for early discharge from isolation and home quarantine, please refer to <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202203/06/P2022030500719.htm>.

Other questions

10. What are the criteria for discharge from isolation for infected persons?

Please refer to the thematic webpage on "Points to Note for Persons who Tested Positive" (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/chi/tested-positive.html>). Regarding "StayHomeSafe Scheme", please also refer to <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/home-quarantine.html>.

Regarding criteria for early discharge from isolation and home quarantine, please refer to <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202203/06/P2022030500719.htm>.

The latest criteria enables relevant persons to ascertain through successive rapid antigen tests that their transmission risks have been reduced to a very low level, thereby allowing them to resume daily activities earlier. This is also conducive to maintaining the daily operation and provision of essential services in Hong Kong. Given the recent proliferation of virus, the Government urges citizens to avoid going out unless strictly necessary and reduce social contacts, and encourages various trades to arrange employees to work from home whenever practicable, thus contributing to the joint efforts in containing the epidemic.

As for persons admitted to hospitals, the Hospital Authority will exercise professional judgment on their specific discharge criteria. The doctor in charge will make clinical judgment, and assess the risk level of a person admitted to hospital upon clinical assessment. For example, if a patient is in clinically stable conditions, and his / her home premises or residential home environment is suitable or he / she will be accepted by other CIFs, the patient will be discharged from hospital as early as possible to stay at home, residential home or other appropriate facility until he / she obtains a negative result (unvaccinated persons on Day 14; vaccinated persons on Day 6 and Day 7). Only by then can the patient safely leave home, residential home or the facility.

11. How to define close contacts?

The determination of close contacts will take into consideration relevant details of the situation. In general, tracing period is counted from two days before symptom onset date of the confirmed case; for asymptomatic case, it is counted from two days before the date of collection of specimen which tested positive. Close contacts refer to:

- Persons who live with the confirmed case in the same household; or
- Persons who have had face-to-face close contacts with the confirmed case (especially when the confirmed case did not wear a mask, such as when having meals together).

Attention: The epidemic prevention measures are adjusted according to the situation. Please refer to Government press releases (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/today.htm>) or COVID-19 thematic website (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>) for latest position.