

Recommendations for public health management of healthcare workers, having had unprotected contact with COVID-19 cases in Switzerland

(Version 2.0, Swissnoso 6.3.2020)

Contact HCW

A contact of a COVID-19 case is a healthcare worker (HCW) not currently presenting symptoms, who has been in contact with a laboratory proven COVID-19 case outside the hospital, or inside the hospital not using appropriate personal protective equipment. The associated risk of infection depends on the level and duration of exposure.

Definition of Contact

- A HCW having had unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g. being coughed on, touching used paper tissues with a bare hand not immediately followed by hand hygiene)
- A HCW having had unprotected contact with a COVID-19 case within 2 meters and > 15 minutes

Measures after unprotected contact with a COVID-2 positive patients

Active self-monitoring for fever and respiratory tract infection symptoms for 14 days

HCW can continue to work as long as asymptomatic and while

- i) Carrying a surgical mask in close contact with patients (<2m) and HCWs
and
- ii) Performing excellent hand hygiene

Measures outside work: HCW should avoid crowds, otherwise no restrictions as long as asymptomatic

Onset of acute respiratory symptoms and/or fever

Rapid access to COVID-19 testing and results

Can continue to work, if test is negative and symptoms are mild

If positive: home isolation and individual recommendations according to staff health

Special population

HCW particularly at risk (>65 years of age, hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, an immune system weakened by disease or treatment, or cancer): Facilities may want to consider limiting exposure of these HCWs to patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, especially during higher risk procedures (e.g., aerosol-generating procedures) if feasible based on staffing availability.

Pregnant HCW: They are not known to be a population at higher risk. But, precautions may need to be considered as for the above mentioned group.