

## Swissnoso recommendations for the winter season 2022/2023 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

Version 1 from 3 October 2022

### Background and rationale

In autumn/winter, SARS-CoV-2 subvariants, along with influenza and other respiratory viruses, will circulate in the population, which may cause challenges regarding diagnostics, treatment decisions, and isolation management. In addition, cases of influenza-like illness may be increasing and pose further challenges to the health care system. These recommendations are geared towards acute-care hospitals but can be adapted to other healthcare settings such as long-term care facilities (LTCF). For other settings, such as outpatient clinics, please refer to the FOPH recommendations. The current Swissnoso recommendations on Covid-19 remain in place<sup>1</sup>.

### Recommendations:

1. Reinforce respiratory etiquette, adequate room ventilation and adherence to standard precautions.
2. Continue to encourage all patients and healthcare workers (HCWs) to stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccination, including booster doses, according to current Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH)/EKIF recommendations<sup>2</sup>.
3. We advise all HCWs in contact with patients to follow the influenza vaccine recommendations by the FOPH/EKIF<sup>3</sup>.
4. Contribute to promoting influenza vaccine for at-risk patients as defined per FOPH<sup>3</sup> starting from October 2022, and, if possible, preferably two weeks before elective admission to a hospital.
5. Use the FOPH COVID-19 testing criteria<sup>4</sup> as a clinical trigger for suspecting/testing for SARS-CoV-2 and other relevant respiratory viruses on admission or throughout hospitalization.
6. If Influenza/RSV are circulating locally, also test symptomatic patients for influenza (A/B) and RSV via nucleic acid test (e.g., PCR) in addition to COVID-19.
7. Maintain isolation precautions (as per local recommendations) for all patients with respiratory illness while (additional) diagnostic work-up is underway.
8. Patients with respiratory illness other than COVID-19 should not be placed in the same room as COVID-19 patients.
9. HCWs with symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (as per FOPH criteria<sup>4</sup>) should be considered for testing as per local recommendations (including referral to occupational health).

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<sup>1</sup> Current Swissnoso IPC recommendations - COVID-19, available under: <https://www.swissnoso.ch/forschung-entwicklung/aktuelle-ereignisse>

<sup>2</sup> FOPH. Corona virus and vaccination (last update from 26.09.2022). <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/de/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/information-fuer-die-aerzteschaft/covid-19-impfung.html#-1942803447>

<sup>3</sup> FOPH. Seasonal influenza. <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/de/home/krankheiten/krankheiten-im-ueberblick/grippe.html> and <https://vaccinateagainsttheflu.ch/en-us/gemeinsam-gegen-grippe.html>

<sup>4</sup> FOPH. Verdachts-, Beprobungs- und Meldekriterien (PDF, 02.05.2022) [https://www.bag.admin.ch/dam/bag/de/dokumente/mt/msys/covid-19-verdachts-meldekriterien.pdf.download.pdf/Verdachts\\_Beprobungs\\_und\\_Meldekriterien.pdf](https://www.bag.admin.ch/dam/bag/de/dokumente/mt/msys/covid-19-verdachts-meldekriterien.pdf.download.pdf/Verdachts_Beprobungs_und_Meldekriterien.pdf)