



Coronavirus Disease-19, Republic of Korea



• Korean • Chinese

About COVID-19 Patient Treatment & Management

Patient Treatment & Management

Case definition and people subject to testing (As of April 2, 2020)

Until details about the clinical characteristics and epidemiological features of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) are identified, it is categorized into the “Group 1 infectious disease - emerging infectious disease syndrome” and responded accordingly.

In accordance with KCDC case definitions, suspected patients and symptomatic patients under investigation can get the diagnostic tests.

Case Definitions (As of April 2, 2020)

Confirmed case

- A person who has been confirmed to be infected with the infectious disease pathogen according to the diagnostic testing standard, regardless of clinical manifestations
 ※ Diagnostic test: COVID-19 genetic (PCR) test, virus isolation

Suspected case

- A person exhibiting fever (37.5 °C or higher) or respiratory symptoms (coughs, shortness of breath, etc.) within 14 days of contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient during the confirmed patient’s symptom-exhibiting period

Patients Under Investigation (PUI)

- A person suspected of COVID-19 according to a physician’s opinion for reasons such as pneumonia of an unknown cause;
- A person with an overseas travel history exhibiting fever (37.5°C or higher) or respiratory symptoms (coughs, shortness of breath, etc.) within 14 days upon entry to Korea; or
- A person exhibiting fever (37.5 °C or higher) or respiratory symptoms (coughs, shortness of breath, etc.) within 14 days with an epidemiological link to a domestic COVID-19 cluster

Guidelines for Suspected Persons Symptomatic of COVID-19

- If you are suspected to get infected with COVID-19, refrain from going outside and call a health center or the call center first for counselling (dial to 1339 or area code + 120). Foreign language services are available.
- Follow the directions given by the 1339 call center, wear a face mask and visit a medical institution operating a Screening station. Upon arrival, notify the medical staff of your overseas travel history

Visit to COVID-19 Screening station and testing

A suspected patient is moved to an isolated or separated area within the Screening station (health center or medical institution) for sample collection. If s/he tests negative, the isolation will be lifted after 14 days of mandatory isolation upon the last date of contact. If s/he tests positive, appropriate treatment will be provided depending on the symptoms.

A person under investigation (PUI) is also moved to an isolated or separated area within the Screening station (health center or medical institution) for sample collection. If s/he tests positive, appropriate treatment will be provided depending on the symptoms. However, if the test result is negative, the person will attend a health education (refrain from moving out, using public transportation, using shared areas, etc.) and be advised to comply with the guidelines suggested in the education for 14 days after developing symptoms.

Treatment and support for confirmed patients

The Korean government classifies patients depending on their severity and provides appropriate treatments in hospitals for the confirmed patients in severe conditions while providing medical services and monitoring for the confirmed cases in homes or facilities who do not need hospitalization.

First, confirmed cases are diagnosed at public health centers, and healthcare specialists in city and provincial level patient management teams classify them based on their severity (mild, moderate, severe, and extremely severe).

Moderate, severe, and extremely severe cases are immediately hospitalized to specialized infectious disease hospitals, nationally designated treatment facilities for treatment.

A Living and Treatment Center (Community Treatment Center) is an isolation facility mostly for mild or asymptomatic confirmed patients who have been discharged from hospitals but find it difficult to get treatment at home. The patient will be monitored twice a day and immediately transported to a health care facility if the symptoms get worse. If the symptoms improve, the patient will be released in accordance with criteria for lifting isolation.

Certain state-run facilities and accommodations in each city and province are designated as Living and Treatment Centers and are supplied with medical staff, medical equipment (pulse oximetry device, thermometer, blood pressure monitor, CPR kit, chest X-ray radiograph, etc.), individual relief kits (underwear, toiletries, face masks, etc.), and hygiene kits (thermometer and medical supplies).

Meanwhile, the Korean government is operating the around-the-clock counseling system for confirmed cases awaiting hospitalization, which provides phone counseling and necessary medication. It checks if patients awaiting

hospitalization have any underlying disease based on the data provided by public institutions, promptly classifies their severity, and determines if they need hospitalization.

In order to encourage the public to fully cooperate infection prevention and help alleviate the burden on their livelihood, the Korean government covers in-hospital care and treatment costs for confirmed patients and expenses incurred from diagnostic tests for suspected cases with national health insurance or government expenditure. Individuals under self-quarantine or receiving in-hospital treatment will be provided with living expenses or paid-leave as well as funeral expenses for deceased patients. However, overseas entrants will be charged for costs incurred for using quarantine facilities and living expenses will not be covered.

Release from quarantine

Confirmed patients who display symptoms are released from quarantine if they meet clinical and testing criteria.

By clinical criteria, a person should not have a fever without the help of fever reducer and his/her clinical symptoms should improve. To meet the testing criteria, a person tests negative from PCR tests – tests to be performed twice with a 24-hour interval.

Confirmed patients who do not display symptoms are released from quarantine if two tests performed on the seventh day after confirmation with a 24-hour interval show negative results. If the PCR test result is positive conducted on the seventh day after confirmation, the next test is to be performed seven days thereafter (14th day upon confirmation). In case this result is also positive, another set of two tests with a 24-hour interval will be performed at the discretion of medical professionals. If the results of both tests are negative to be conducted with a 24-hour interval, the patient will be released from quarantine.

Consultation

Community Health Center | Call Center **1339** | Area Code + Dasan Call Center **120** | Area Code + **114**

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