



# CHARLES COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES



## SPECIAL ORDER 2020-02

### Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol Implementation for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Issue Date: 04/08/2020 Revised:

Expiration Date: N/A

#### I. OVERVIEW

With the annual occurrence of influenza season, and with the recent developments regarding the Coronavirus, we are all reminded that the manner in which we approach infection control incidents is of the utmost importance. Many within the Charles County Department of Emergency Services (CCDES), Charles County Association of Emergency Medical Services (CCAEMS) and the Office of the Medical Director are remaining vigilant to emerging issues related to infection control. Of concern is the Coronavirus outbreak which originated in the Wuhan province of China, and the subsequent cases that have occurred here in the United States and elsewhere throughout the world. This policy and procedure outline the preparation, mobilization, and demobilization required for care and transport of suspected and known Coronavirus 2019 patients.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

- **Close Contact** - Close contact is defined as being within six (6) feet of a COVID-19 patient or being within the patient's care area or room for a prolonged period of time. Brief interactions such as walking by a person or moving past their room do not constitute close contact.
- **Coronavirus 2019** - A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold. On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV". There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.



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- **EMSOP** - The EMS Operational Program is the jurisdictional EMS system in place to provide emergency medical services.
- **Person Under Investigation (PUI)** - A person who meets the CDC established criteria for COVID-19 symptoms and epidemiological risk factors. Symptoms include a fever, cough, sore throat and lower respiratory infection.
- **Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)** - For the purpose of this Special Order, PPE is considered those items in accordance with the recommendations of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems - Infection Control and PPE Guidance (attachment). Such items included are gloves, respiratory protection masks, eye protection and gowns.

## III. PURPOSE

To provide guidance for our EMSOP for the implementation of the Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol. This Special Order is an augmentation to the most current version of Special Order 2020-01.

## IV. BACKGROUND

A global pandemic due to COVID-19 has the potential to create a surge in calls for emergency medical services (EMS) related to viral syndromes. On March 5, 2020, Governor Larry Hogan declared a state of emergency in response to the first documented cases in Maryland. Furthermore, COVID-19 will continue to cause continued high volumes of calls for service from EMS and concurrent absenteeism in the EMS workforce for weeks to months.

With the anticipated potential for unprecedented patient volumes for EMS and Maryland hospitals, combined with receiving hospital capacity, disease illness severity, EMS demand and EMS workforce availability, it is necessary to implement a protocol that assists EMS clinicians in identifying patients that may be appropriate to care for themselves safely at home, without transport to an emergency department. Therefore, the Executive Director of MIEMSS and the Chairman of the Maryland EMS Board issued this emergency protocol under their authority in Education Article Section 13-516(d)(1) and COMAR 30.03.05.02(I).



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## V. POLICY

- A. Our EMSOP shall provide local guidance and specific resource information within our Viral Infection Home Care Instructions.
  - 1. The instructions will be printed in both English and Spanish.
  - 2. The instructions will be printed as a two-sided document.
- B. Our EMSOP shall provide our EMS clinicians with copies of the following:
  - 1. Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol.
  - 2. Viral Infection Home Care Instructions (a double-sided copy; provided to patients who are not transported by EMS).
- C. The Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol may be used by ALS or BLS clinicians for appropriate patients. It should be in-hand and completed for each relevant patient. If the patient does not meet viral syndrome criteria, the EMS clinician shall refer to the appropriate treatment protocol in the *Maryland Medical Protocols for EMS*.
- D. The EMS clinician shall document every use of the protocol under the COVID-19 tab in eMEDS.
- E. Our EMSOP will make (volume dependent) a follow-up phone call or visit within twenty-four (24) hours for every patient who is not transported to the ED using the protocol.
  - 1. Follow-up calls or visits should be documented under "Call Type: Mobile Integrated Health",
  - 2. COVID-19 follow-up = Yes.
- F. Our EMSOP shall provide education to all EMS clinicians on the appropriate application of this protocol.



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## VI. PROCESS

- A. First responders must employ the proper level of PPE when encountering a PUI.
- B. Assess a PUI from distance of six (6) feet or more. If possible, have the patient meet you outside of the patient's residence.
- C. EMS Clinicians shall use the Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol (attached) to assess the PUI.
- D. If the patient meets the criteria as outlined in the Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol and is identified as competent enough to stay at home for self-care:
  - 1. Leave the patient with the Viral Infection Home Care Instructions,
  - 2. Document the incident as required in eMEDS to ensure proper follow-up.
- E. Patients who meet the criteria and wish to be transported to the emergency room, should be treated and transported as requested.
- F. The Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) Team will facilitate follow-up phone calls and visits as needed with the Charles County Health Department.
  - 1. Patients who require additional medical care should be referred to the appropriate medical treatment facility or,
  - 2. If they are unable to transport themselves and require medical treatment, an ambulance should be dispatched.
- G. All documentation generated should be referred to Quality Assurance for review.



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## VII. APPROVAL

Approved: Michelle L Lilly  
Michelle Lilly, Director

Date: 4/8/2020

Approved: Kevin Seaman  
Kevin Seaman, MD

Date: 04/20/20

Approved: Andrew Spalding  
Andrew Spalding, Chief; CCAEMS

Date: 04/08/2020



# Viral Syndrome Pandemic Triage Protocol



EFFECTIVE March 17, 2020 until rescinded or superceded

For Use By BLS and ALS Clinicians

YES

NO

☐☒

Patient age is between 2 and 55 years

☐☒

Patient has a suspected viral syndrome with at least two (2) of the following symptoms:  
fever, cough, body aches, or sore throat

☒☐

Patient has a history of immunosuppression, or is taking medicines that depress the immune system (cancer undergoing chemotherapy, transplant patient, HIV, etc.)

☒☐

Patient has a history of diabetes

☒☐

Patient has a history of heart disease

☒☐

Patient has a history of COPD or lung disease

☐☒

Patient has a heart rate between : 50 - 110 bpm (age 13-55 years);  
(age 2-5 years: 80-140 bpm; age 6-12 years: 70-120 bpm)

☐☒

Patient has a systolic blood pressure between: 110-180 mmHg (age 13-55 years);  
(age 2-5 years: > 80mmHg; age 6-12 years: > 90mmHg)

☐☒

Oxygen saturation (SpO<sub>2</sub>) greater than or equal to 94%

☐☒

Clear lung sounds

☐☒

Respiratory rate between 12 - 22 breaths per minute, and the patient does not complain of shortness of breath

☐☒

Patient is able to ambulate without difficulty

☐☒

Patient is agreeable to home self-care

**ANY CHECKS** in a shaded box indicate that patient transport should be encouraged.

If **ALL** CHECKS are in non-shaded boxes, patient may provide self-care at home.  
Refer to no-transport instructions for patients.

Any patient may be transported at the EMS Clinician's discretion.

This emergency protocol was issued by the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, after approval by the Executive Director and Chairman of the State Emergency Medical Services Board, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in accordance with Education Article Section 13-516(d)(1) and COMAR 30.03.05.02(I) and a catastrophic health emergency proclamation.



# Viral Infection

## Home Care Instructions



Emergency Medical Services evaluated you today for an apparent viral respiratory infection (e.g., influenza, COVID-19, and other common respiratory viruses). At this time your illness does not require you to go to an emergency department. Your vital signs are within acceptable ranges, including your heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and oxygen level.

It is important that you continue to treat your symptoms, monitor your own condition, and take steps to prevent spreading the infection to others.

You should follow the steps below:

- **Stay home except to get medical care.** Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
- **Drink plenty of fluids** to stay very well-hydrated. Drink non-carbonated fluids. Avoid alcohol.
- **Take ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed for fever or body aches, unless you have previously been told not to use these medicines.** For adults, the recommended dose for ibuprofen is 400 or 600 mg every 6 hours, and for acetaminophen the dose is 650 mg every 4 hours. For children, consult medication packaging for appropriate weight-based dosing.
- **Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home.**
  - As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **If you need follow-up care, call your healthcare provider before going there.** Call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have the flu, COVID-19, or similar respiratory illness. Advise your healthcare provider that you called 911 and were screened by EMS and told at that time that you may remain at home. Your health care provider may arrange a follow-up visit with you in person or via telehealth. Alerting your health care provider in this way will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- **Wear a facemask,** if you have one, when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue then throw the tissue in the trash.**
- **Clean your hands often.** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid sharing personal household items,** such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils towels, or bedding with other people or pets. After using, wash them thoroughly.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces** using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

## **Monitor Your Symptoms**

If you are in any way worsening, please seek care by contacting your doctor, going to an urgent care center, or going to your nearest emergency department for further evaluation and treatment of your condition. This could include, but is not limited to:

- High or persistent fevers, vomiting, trouble breathing or shortness of breath, coughing up blood, severe headaches, neck pain/stiffness, or any new or worsening symptoms or concerns.
- If you are unable to walk or you are experiencing shortness of breath that limits your ability to go by private car, please call 9-1-1.

**Before seeking care**, call your healthcare provider, if possible, and tell them that you have a respiratory infection. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility.

**If you have a medical emergency and need to call 9-1-1**, notify the operator that you have a respiratory infection and EMS has responded once to you regarding your symptoms. They advised to call back if my condition worsened. If possible, put on a facemask before EMS arrives.

## **Discontinuing Home Isolation**

**If your doctor or local health department advises you to remain on home isolation precautions**, please contact them for advice for when it is appropriate to discontinue this and resume normal daily activities.

**If you have not been advised about home isolation precautions by your doctor or local health department**, please stay home when you are sick and until there is no fever for a minimum of 24 hours without medicine like Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil.

## **Local Resource Guide**

For more information specific for your location:

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/health-and-human-services/covid-19>

<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

## **COVID-19 Call Center Hotline**

301-609-6717

*Recommendations related to coronavirus may change over time. Please check the CDC website for updates on home quarantine, preventing disease spread, and treatment:*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

## **Telehealth Resources to Consider:**

- a. LiveHealth Online <https://livehealthonline.com/> (Blue Cross)
- b. Teladoc <https://www.aetna.com/services/telehealth.html> (Aetna)
- c. KPNOW <https://my.kp.org/shbp/kp-now-telemedicine-appointment/> (Kaiser)
- d. Cigna Telehealth <https://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/member-resources/telehealth-connection-program> (Cigna)



# Infección viral

## Instrucciones para el cuidado en casa



Los Servicios Médicos de Emergencia lo(a) evaluaron hoy por una aparente infección respiratoria viral (por ejemplo, influenza, COVID-19, y otros virus respiratorios comunes). En este momento su enfermedad no requiere que vaya a un departamento de emergencia. Sus signos vitales están dentro de los rangos aceptables, incluyendo su ritmo cardíaco, ritmo respiratorio, presión arterial y nivel de oxígeno.

Es importante que continúe tratando sus síntomas, supervisando su propia condición y tomando medidas para prevenir la propagación de la infección a otros.

### Debe seguir los siguientes pasos:

- **Quédese en casa, excepto para recibir atención médica.** No vaya al trabajo, a la escuela o a las áreas públicas. Evite usar el transporte público, los viajes compartidos o los taxis.
- **Beba mucho líquido** para mantenerse muy bien hidratado. Beba líquidos sin gas. Evite el alcohol.
- **Tome ibuprofeno (Motrin, Advil) o paracetamol (Tylenol) según sea necesario para la fiebre o los dolores corporales, a menos que le hayan dicho previamente que no use estos medicamentos.** Para los adultos, la dosis recomendada de ibuprofeno es de 400 o 600 mg cada 6 horas, y la de acetaminofeno es de 650 mg cada 4 horas. En el caso de los niños, consulte los envases de los medicamentos para obtener la dosis adecuada en función del peso.
- **Sepárese de otras personas y animales en su casa.**
  - En la medida de lo posible, quédese en una habitación específica y lejos de otras personas en su casa. Use un baño separado, si está disponible.
- **Si necesita cuidados de seguimiento, llame a su proveedor de atención médica antes de ir allí.** Llame a su proveedor de atención médica y dígame que tiene o puede tener la gripe, COVID-19, o una enfermedad respiratoria similar. Informe a su proveedor de atención médica que llamó al 911 y que fue examinado por el servicio médico de emergencia y le dijeron en ese momento que puede permanecer en su casa. Su proveedor de atención médica puede concertar una visita de seguimiento con usted en persona o a través de la telesalud. Alertar a su proveedor de atención médica de esta manera ayudará al consultorio del proveedor de atención médica a tomar medidas para evitar que otras personas se infecten o se expongan.
- **Use una mascarilla,** si la tiene, cuando esté cerca de otras personas (por ejemplo, compartiendo una habitación o un vehículo) o mascotas y antes de entrar al consultorio del proveedor de atención médica.
- **Cubra su tos y estornudos con un pañuelo desechable y luego arroje el pañuelo a la basura.**
- **Lávese las manos a menudo.** Lávese las manos a menudo con agua y jabón durante al menos 20 segundos, especialmente después de ir al baño, antes de comer y después de sonarse la nariz, toser o estornudar. Si no se dispone de agua y jabón, utilice un desinfectante para manos a base de alcohol con al menos un 60% de alcohol. Siempre lávese las manos con agua y jabón si las manos están visiblemente sucias.
- **Evite compartir artículos personales de la casa,** como platos, vasos, tazas, utensilios para comer, toallas o ropa de cama con otras personas o mascotas. Después de usarlos, lávelos bien.

- **Limpie y desinfecte los objetos y superficies** que se tocan con frecuencia usando un aerosol o una toallita de limpieza doméstica común.

### **Vigile Sus Síntomas**

Si está empeorando de alguna manera, por favor busque atención médica comunicándose con su médico, acudiendo a un centro de atención urgente o yendo al departamento de emergencias más cercano para una mayor evaluación y tratamiento de su condición. Esto podría incluir, entre otras cosas:

- Fiebres altas o persistentes, vómito, problemas para respirar o falta de aliento, tos con sangre, fuertes dolores de cabeza, dolor o rigidez en el cuello, o cualquier síntoma o preocupación nueva o que empeore.
- Si no puede caminar o está experimentando falta de aliento que limita su capacidad para ir en coche privado, por favor llame al 9-1-1.

**Antes de buscar atención médica**, llame a su médico, si es posible, y dígame que tiene una infección respiratoria. Póngase una mascarilla antes de entrar en el centro.

**Si tiene una emergencia médica y necesita llamar al 9-1-1**, notifique a la operadora que tiene una infección respiratoria y que EMS le ha respondido una vez con respecto a sus síntomas. Me aconsejaron que llamara de nuevo si mi condición empeoraba. Si es posible, póngase una mascarilla antes de que llegue el servicio de emergencias.

### **Descontinuar el Aislamiento en el Hogar**

**Si su médico o el departamento de salud local le aconsejan que siga tomando precauciones de aislamiento en el hogar**, por favor comuníquese con ellos para que le aconsejen cuándo es apropiado interrumpirlo y reanudar las actividades diarias normales.

**Si su médico o el departamento de salud local no le han aconsejado sobre las precauciones de aislamiento en el hogar**, por favor permanezca en casa cuando esté enfermo y hasta que no haya fiebre durante un mínimo de 24 horas sin medicamentos como Tylenol, Motrin o Advil.

### **Recursos Locales**

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/health-and-human-services/covid-19>

<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

### **COVID-19 Centro de Llamadas**

301-609-6717

*Las recomendaciones relacionadas con el coronavirus pueden cambiar con el tiempo. Por favor, consulte el sitio web de los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC) para obtener información actualizada sobre la cuarentena domiciliar, la prevención de la propagación de la enfermedad y el tratamiento.:*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

### **Recursos de telesalud que se deben tener en cuenta:**

- LiveHealth Online <https://livehealthonline.com/> (Blue Cross)
- Teladoc <https://www.aetna.com/services/telehealth.html> (Aetna)
- KPNOW <https://my.kp.org/shbp/kp-now-telemedicine-appointment/> (Kaiser)
- Cigna Telehealth <https://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/member-resources/telehealth-connection-program> (Cigna)