

## WHAT IS THE COST OF THE COVID-19 TEST?

If you are paying up front for the test it will cost you R 990.00. If you belong to a medical scheme we will charge your scheme at standard scheme rates.

## TABLE 1. COVID-19 CASE DEFINITION - 12 MARCH 2020

Persons with acute respiratory illness with sudden onset of acute symptoms such as cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever [ $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$  (measured) or history of fever (subjective)] irrespective of admission status

AND

In the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms, met at least one of the following epidemiological criteria:

- Were in close contact<sup>1</sup> with a confirmed<sup>2</sup> or probable<sup>3</sup> case of SARS-CoV-2 infection;

OR

- Had a history of international travel (highest risk to countries with local transmission of the virus)

OR

- Worked in, or attended a health care facility where patients with SARS-CoV-2 infections were being treated

OR

- Admitted with severe pneumonia of unknown aetiology

- <sup>1</sup>Close contact: A person having had face-to-face contact or was in a closed environment with a COVID-19 case; this includes, amongst others, all persons living in the same household as a COVID-19 case and, people working closely in the same environment as a case. A healthcare worker or other person providing direct care for a COVID-19 case, while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment or PPE (e.g., gowns, gloves, NIOSH-certified disposable N95 respirator, eye protection). A contact in an aircraft sitting within two seats (in any direction) of the COVID-19 case, travel companions or persons providing care, and crew members serving in the section of the aircraft where the index case was seated.

- <sup>2</sup>Confirmed case: A person with laboratory confirmation of SARS-CoV-2 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

- <sup>3</sup>Probable case: A PUI for whom testing for SARS-CoV-2 is inconclusive (the result of the test reported by the laboratory) or for whom testing was positive on a pan-coronavirus assay.

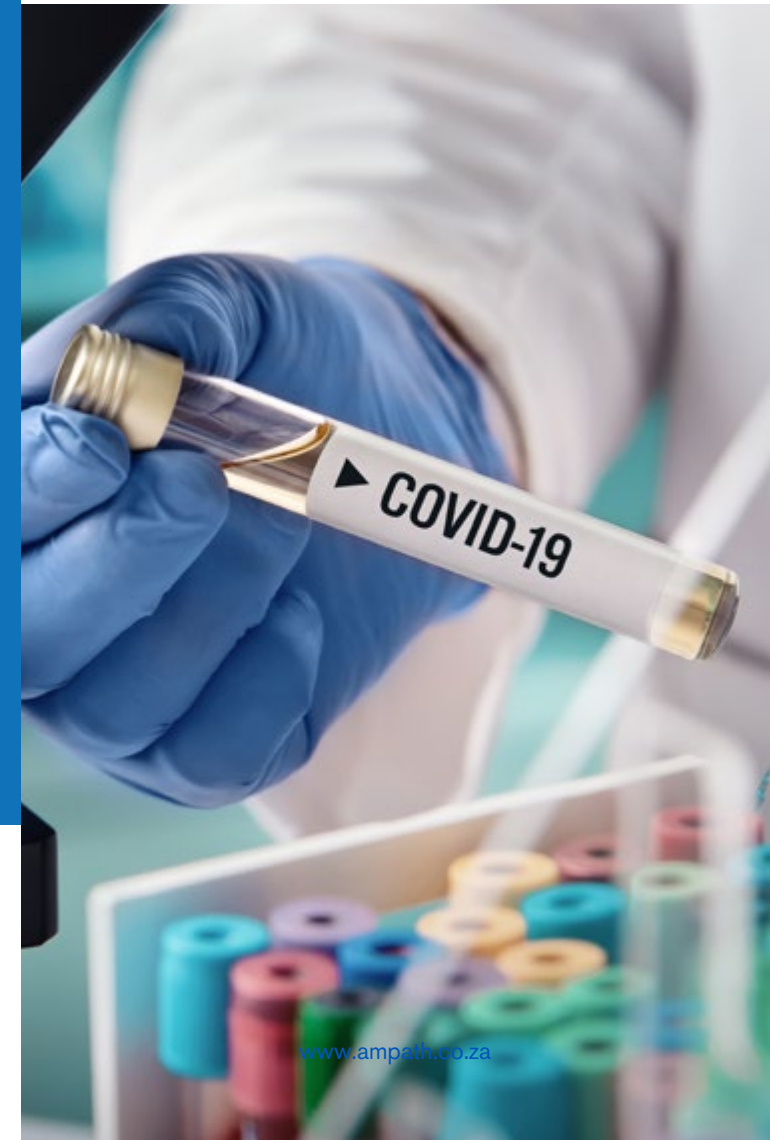
PATHOLOGISTS · PATOLOE

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*Your consulting pathologists*

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



*Your consulting pathologists*



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# COVID-19: WHAT DO PATIENTS NEED TO KNOW?

## WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)?

SARS-CoV-2 is a novel coronavirus that was identified in Wuhan, China at the end of 2019 and causes the disease known as COVID-19. It has now spread to all continents and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on the 11th March 2020.

## CAN SOUTH AFRICANS GET COVID-19?

As of the 11th March 2020, there have been 13 confirmed cases in South Africa. These are all travellers to Europe who were infected there. There is currently no evidence of local transmission in our SA communities, however this is likely to change and we should expect local spread in the next few weeks. The current count of cases in SA can be accessed on the NICD's website at: <http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/covid-19-situational-reports/>

## HOW IS THE VIRUS SPREAD?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source but is now spreading from person to person through respiratory droplets when a person coughs and sneezes. It may also be possible to get infected by touching a surface or an object that has virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes, but this is not the main way that the virus spreads.



## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

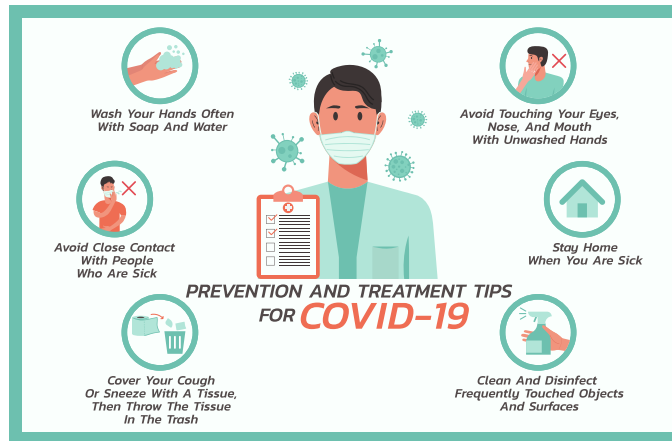
Patients with COVID-19 may have no symptoms, mild symptoms or severe symptoms. Symptoms typically develop from 5 days up to 14 days after becoming infected with the virus. For symptomatic infections, a fever, cough and a flu-like illness are most common. The elderly and those with chronic medical conditions, such as chronic heart or lung disease, are most at risk of severe infections requiring hospital care.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM COVID-19?

The following simple measures will help protect you and your family from infection:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Don't touch your eyes, mouth or nose
- Wash your hand frequently with soap and water or an alcohol based hand sanitiser (at least 60%)

Wearing a mask has not been proven to prevent you from becoming infected. If you have travelled to an affected country or have had contact with a known case, and yourself develop symptoms within 2 weeks then you should self-isolate at home and get tested for the infection.



## SHOULD I GET VACCINATED FOR INFLUENZA

Absolutely yes. It is highly recommended that all South Africans get themselves vaccinated for influenza to protect themselves from influenza and stay healthy during the flu season. We are faced with the scenario of both a flu epidemic and a novel coronavirus pandemic and protecting yourself against influenza will also provide some protection against COVID-19.

## IS THERE ANY SPECIFIC TREATMENT

There is no specific antiviral treatment or vaccine for COVID-19. Treatment is supportive to relieve symptoms. Severe infections will require admission to hospital.

## WHEN SHOULD I BE WORRIED ABOUT A POSSIBLE CORONAVIRUS INFECTION?

If you develop symptoms within 14 days of travelling to an affected country or contact with a known case, then should stay at home and contact your GP or hospital's casualty department for a consultation (see Table 1 for current Case Definition). It is advised to phone them ahead of time so that they can prepare for your arrival to minimise the risk of spread to other patients.

## HOW DO I GET TESTED FOR COVID-19?

Ampath is performing laboratory testing for COVID-19 by means of a highly accurate test that detects the virus's genetic material (a PCR test). If your doctor suspects that you are infected he/she will send you with an Ampath request form and additional forms required by the Dept. of Health, for a throat swab to be collected for the test. Please phone your local Ampath depot before coming for the test so that they can advise you where to go and what you need to do to protect others from the infection. Please note that you cannot be tested without a referral from a medical doctor.

