

Urgent/Emergent OR Guidance for COVID19 Testing & PPE

*****The COVID19 scenario continues to evolve and these recommendations are based on the limited data currently available. Recommendations are subject to change based on future clinical needs and evidence.**

As has been previously noted, all non-urgent/emergent cases should be canceled or delayed per policy. Existing OR guidance on this topic can also be found at:

<https://www.nebraskamed.com/for-providers/covid19>

Due to resource limitations related to testing capacity and PPE, the guidance below is aligned with protecting our providers while providing the safest possible care for our patients in potentially suboptimal conditions. Powered Air Purifying Respirator(PAPR) use is not routinely advised in operative settings due to a lack of safety data and the potential for increased operative airflow into the surgical field increasing risk for surgical site infection. Therefore, we would recommend PPARs be restricted to operative scenarios with the highest risk for healthcare worker close contact with aerosols from the respiratory tract. Procedures presumed to be at higher risk are generally those that involve the airway (see below for definition). Due to increased risk of infection, **PAPRs should NOT be used with placement of any prosthetic material.**

HIGH RISK PROCEDURES are defined as:

- Direct upper (include nose & sinuses) or lower airway manipulation with cautery, incision, cannulation, etc.
- Open chest lung procedures
- Insufflation of bowel or peritoneum

URGENT OPERATIVE CASES

- **We do not currently have the capacity to test every operative patient, nor will we have adequate PPE to utilize N95 for all procedures. Patients should be screened for possible COVID19 as it is not practical to assume that all cases are COVID19 related.**

If possible, urgent procedures should be delayed for 48 hours to enable COVID-19 testing prior to operative management under the following circumstances:

- Asymptomatic patients undergoing **HIGH RISK** surgical procedures
- Any patient with new onset fever, cough or shortness of breath within the last 7 days or close contact with a **known** COVID-19 case in last 14 days
- Test results will guide precautions taken in the OR. A negative test in an asymptomatic patient means surgery can proceed without special COVID19 precautions per standard operating procedures. Patients with symptoms should be discussed with infection control even if the test is negative. For any questions, please page Infection Control at 888-4646.

- Procedures can proceed without COVID-19 testing under the following circumstances:
- Asymptomatic, non-high-risk procedure
 - No new onset fever, cough, or shortness of breath in the last 7 days AND no close contact with a **known** COVID-19 case in last 14 days

EMERGENT OPERATIVE CASES

If a history can be obtained (either from patient or reliable family member) and no new onset fever, cough, or shortness of breath in the last 7 days AND no close contact with a **known** COVID-19 case in last 14 days

- Non-high-risk procedure: no testing, no COVID-19 precautions
- High-risk procedure or unable to obtain history (due to trauma or mental status): Test and use COVID-19 precautions

KNOWN COVID-19 OPERATIVE CASE (URGENT OR EMERGENT)

If a COVID19 patient requires surgery, and it can be delayed 1-2 weeks (or longer) this would be ideal for the safety of all. If this cannot be achieved, see below.

1. Non-high-risk procedures: Use N95, faceshield, gown and gloves. Intubate in negative pressure room. Once airway is controlled there is very limited risk of virus aerosolization. Minimize number of persons in the OR to essential personnel.
2. High-risk procedures: Similar to above with exception of use of PAPRs instead of N95. Minimize number of persons in the OR to essential personnel. Just-In-Time PPE/PAPR training program will be necessary.
3. If COVID19 diagnosis was > 45 days ago AND the patient is asymptomatic at least 7 days, the acute infection is considered resolved and usual OR PPE are recommended (gown, gloves, mask, eye protection).
4. For assistance in obtaining testing or to discuss case management, please page Infection Control at 888-4646.