



# COVID-19 Telephone assessment and testing pathway for patients (aged 13 years and older) who phone general practice and healthcare settings other than receiving hospitals



1. A patient with acute respiratory infection (sudden onset of at least one of the following: cough, fever, shortness of breath)

**OR**

2. Sudden onset of anosmia<sup>1</sup>, ageusia<sup>2</sup> or dysgeusia<sup>3</sup>

**AND** with no other aetiology that fully explains the clinical presentation

Please note other symptoms that are less common may include fatigue, sore throat, nasal congestion, headaches, muscle/joint pain, nausea or vomiting, diarrhoea, chills/dizziness, different types of skin rash, conjunctivitis. Symptoms of severe COVID-19 disease may include shortness of breath, loss of appetite, confusion, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, high temperature (above 38 °C). Clinical judgement should be applied in application of these criteria to determine who requires testing.

Close contacts of a confirmed case should be tested for COVID-19 as per current guidance. Testing of close contacts will vary according to vaccination status and previous Covid-19 infection. The monitoring and testing of contacts is being carried out by the contact management programme and Public Health Departments. **There is now no need for GPs to arrange for testing of contacts of confirmed cases.** For further information on contact tracing, see [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> Loss of sense of smell; <sup>2</sup> Loss of sense of taste; <sup>3</sup> Distortion of sense of taste

**NO**

Some RTI symptoms present but doesn't meet the criteria above

Unless assessment at hospital is indicated:

- Advise patient to stay at home and self-isolate for a minimum of 48 hours from the resolution of symptoms.
- If patient is a healthcare worker, they may return to work under passive self-monitoring, however they must be symptom free for 48 hours prior to return to work.
- Everyone is asked to adhere to [Public Health advice](#) on reducing their contacts and preventing infection.

**YES**

- Advise the patient to get tested as per current [guidance](#).
- Advise the patient who to contact if symptoms are worsening, including out-of-hours

Unless assessment at hospital is indicated:

- Advise patient to stay at home and self-isolate pending test results, even if the patient is vaccinated.
- The whole household must [restrict movements](#) until the results of the test are known.
- If positive:** Advise patient to self isolate for the appropriate period (depending on their vaccination status and history of previous Covid 19 infection) as per current [guidance](#).
- If not detected:** Advise patient to restrict their movement until 48 hours after resolution of symptoms.
- Everyone is asked to adhere to [Public Health advice](#) on reducing their contacts and preventing infection.