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Be Aware of Current Hospital and Physician COVID-19 Testing Criteria for Elderly and Medically Vulnerable Individuals

The Florida Department of Health and the Agency for Health Care Administration are highlighting current guidance related COVID-19 testing for the elderly or individuals with a serious underlying medical condition.

COVID-19 testing should be considered in **individuals 65 or older or individuals with a severe underlying medical condition who have new onset lower respiratory track disease or pneumonia**, either the inpatient or outpatient setting. Please see http://ahca.myflorida.com/docs/17719_COVID-19_Testing_Criteria_for_the_Elderly_Flyer.pdf

The following individuals should be tested for COVID-19 before their release from a hospital:

1. Individuals 65 or older who have new onset lower respiratory track disease or pneumonia
2. Individuals with severe underlying medical conditions who have new onset lower respiratory track disease or pneumonia
3. Individuals 65 or older with a fever of 100.4 or higher *and* cough
4. Individuals with severe underlying medical conditions with a fever of 100.4 or higher *and* cough
5. Individuals 65 or older with a fever of 100.4 or higher *and* other respiratory symptoms including shortness of breath
6. Individuals with severe underlying medical conditions with a fever of 100.4 or higher *and* other respiratory symptoms including shortness of breath

Testing is available from the Florida Department of Health (DOH), Bureau of Public Health Laboratories, or commercial or local CLIA laboratories

performing the test.

Only a nasopharyngeal swab is needed. Have the patient blow their nose, then use the same swab to swab the inside of each nostril. Please use appropriate viral specimen collection materials. Sputum or bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) samples may also be collected.

To ensure prioritized handling and a rapid turnaround time by DOH, you will need a Person Under Investigation (PUI) number.

Please call (850) 245-4401 so that a PUI number will be assigned. When calling, state that you are requesting a COVID-19 PUI number for a hospitalized patient. You will need patient demographic information.

Add the PUI number to the laboratory requisition form. [Please click here to download the Laboratory Requisition Form](#). Mark the form “COVID-19” by “Other” in the Virology test section.

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 44,000 health care facilities and 53 health plans, and publishes health care data and statistics at www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov. Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(/AHCAFlorida\)](#).