

Guidelines for Active Epidemiological Investigation in Patients with Novel Coronavirus Infection (Tentative Version)

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This article was prepared for healthcare centers to promptly conduct an active epidemiological investigation in patients with novel coronavirus infection (confirmed patients) or other relevant individuals detected in Japan, according to Article 15 of the Act on the Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Medical Care for Patients with Infectious Diseases.

(Subjects of investigation)

Definitions of terms

- "Patients (confirmed patients)" refer to "individuals who are suspected to have novel coronavirus infection based on clinical characteristics, etc. and are diagnosed with the infection by test."
 - "Suspected disease carriers" refer to "individuals who are suspected to have novel coronavirus infection based on clinical characteristics, etc. and are diagnosed with suspected novel coronavirus infection."
 - "Close contacts" refer to the following individuals whom "patients (confirmed patients)" have contacted after the date of onset:
 - Those who have lived with or had prolonged contact (including contact inside a car, plane, etc.) with a person suspected to have novel coronavirus infection;
 - Those who have consulted/examined, nursed, or cared for a patient suspected to have novel coronavirus infection, without appropriate protection against infection;
 - Those who are likely to have directly touched contaminants such as respiratory tract secretions or body fluids of a person suspected to have novel coronavirus infection;
 - Any others who have contacted a "patient (confirmed patient)" without taking the necessary infection prevention measures, at a distance such that they could touch him/her with their hand or talk with him/her face-to-face (2 meters, as a rough guide) (patient's infectivity is comprehensively assessed based on his/her conditions, such as symptoms and status of mask use).
- Subjects of active epidemiological investigation are "patients (confirmed patients)" and "close contacts," defined above. If the probability that a "suspected disease carrier" will be determined as a confirmed patient, that person may be subject to an active epidemiological investigation, on the assumption that he/she is a confirmed patient. For "asymptomatic carriers (those who do not present with clinical characteristics, but are diagnosed with novel coronavirus infection by test)," the probability of future onset should be evaluated based on the timing of sampling and epidemiological information, in order to determine the implementation of an active epidemiological investigation, individually.

(Details of investigation)

- For "patients (confirmed patients)," collect basic information, clinical information, possible source of infection, contacts, and other necessary information. (Attached Investigation Forms 1, 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3)
- For "close contacts," ask them to pay attention to their health conditions for 14 days after the last exposure, and to inform a healthcare center before visiting a medical institution if they develop a fever or respiratory symptoms. (Attached Investigation Form 3)
- If a "close contact" develops fever or respiratory symptoms, treat him/her as a subject for testing. Even when a close contact is assumed to be at a high risk of developing a severe novel coronavirus infection, monitor his/her health conditions without performing a test, while taking measures to reduce the risk of infection transmission if he/she presents with no symptoms. Pay careful attention to changes in the physical condition of a "close contact" who is assumed to be at high risk of developing a severe novel coronavirus infection.

(Infection prevention measures at the time of investigation)

- When a person in charge of active epidemiological investigation conducts a face-to-face investigation on subjects, he/she needs to wear a surgical mask and wash his/her hands appropriately.
- When conducting a face-to-face investigation on a subject with any symptoms such as a cough, have him/her wear a surgical mask. The person in charge of the investigation should wear eye protection (goggles or a face shield), in addition to using a surgical mask and appropriate hand washing.

(Treatment for close contacts)

- For "close contacts," healthcare centers should encourage them to thoroughly comply with coughing etiquette and hand washing, and to always pay attention to their health conditions.
- For those living with "close contacts," advise them to wear surgical masks and comply with hand hygiene.
- Inform them that waste treatment and cleaning of linens or other clothes for "close contacts" should be conducted as usual.
- No restrictions on outings are required for family members of "close contacts" or persons around them (such as colleagues).
- For samples transportation from medical institutions, refer to the "Manual for Collection and Transportation of samples from Patients with Suspected 2019-nCoV (Novel Coronavirus) Infection."