Provincial Protocol for Management of Patients in the Operating Room in the COVID-19 Pandemic
Updated April 18, 2023

General parameters

This protocol applies to OR patients (including ECT patients), and Labor and Delivery patients.

All Operating Room patients are only to be tested if they are symptomatic.

All patients coming to the OR will be screened for recent COVID-19 illness and respiratory symptoms, required hospital isolation, and recent exposures using the Inpatient Respiratory Illness Screening Tool by an OR staff member. Emergency cases should have their screening questionnaire completed in the Emergency Department.

When a surgical patient is symptomatic and tests negative for COVID AND the surgery is deemed necessary by the surgical team, then please test the patient for Influenza and RSV (if available). If Influenza and RSV testing is not available (ie outside of respiratory season), then implement Droplet/Contact precautions.

In the event a patient is diagnosed with another respiratory illness and not COVID, initiate appropriate precautions for the identified organism.

1. Ask the patient if they have had COVID illness in the last 60 days:

   COVID illness is defined as: a positive test (home antigen/ID Now/PCR) OR COVID symptoms with close contact to a person with a positive COVID test

2. If a patient has had COVID illness in the last 60 days:

   Do not test them pre-op or at admission.

   Screen using the Inpatient Respiratory Illness Screening Tool.

   - If they screen negative-> no precautions required.
   - If they screen positive -> the surgical team should decide if their case warrants proceeding through a COVID OR or be deferred.

3. If a patient has not had COVID illness in the last 60 days but screens positive on the Inpatient Respiratory Illness Screening Tool,

   The surgical team should decide if their case should proceed or be deferred.

   If wanting to proceed, test the patient (if a COVID test result is not yet known),

   - If they test negative -> proceed in a regular OR and regular post op pathway. Patient being admitted post op will require isolation on the inpatient unit.
   - If they test positive ->proceed in a COVID OR or be deferred per the surgical team. Patient's being admitted post op will require isolation on the inpatient unit.

Health PEI