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Implementation: To be determined by each Service

Change Notification UK National Blood Services No. 29 - 2020

Coronavirus Infection

These changes apply to the Whole Blood and Components Donor Selection Guidelines

Please make the following changes to the Coronavirus Infection topic:

Includes SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)
MERS (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome)
COVID-19 (due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV)

Definition **Symptoms of Coronavirus infection:**

- Fever
- New persistent cough
- Loss, or change in sense of smell and/or taste

Confirmed Infection: The donor has had a positive test for the presence of Coronavirus, usually by a throat and nose swab. This does not include tests for antibodies to Coronavirus.

Recovery from Coronavirus symptoms: ~~In line with Public Health England advice, donors~~ Donors can be considered to have recovered if they: ~~are well and free of fever and respiratory symptoms:~~

- Are generally well
- Do not have a fever
- Do not have respiratory symptoms (except for a persistent cough)

Some individuals may have a ~~persistent~~ cough, or ~~reduced~~ sense of smell or taste, for some weeks after resolution of their infection but they can be considered as recovered for the purposes of blood and component donation.

1. Affected Individual

Includes Donors who have had confirmed, or suspected, Coronavirus infection and donors who report the symptoms listed above.

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Obligatory **Must not donate**

- Discretionary*
- a) If the donor had Coronavirus symptoms, has tested **positive** for the presence of Coronavirus and it is at least 28 days from resolution of symptoms, accept. (A subsequent negative test for the presence of Coronavirus does not shorten this 28-day deferral.)
 - b) If the donor had Coronavirus symptoms but tested **negative** for the presence of Coronavirus and it is at least 14 days from resolution of symptoms, accept.
 - c) If the donor had Coronavirus symptoms and
 - has not been tested for the presence of Coronavirus, or
 - has been tested but is not aware of the result, when it is at least 28 days from resolution of symptoms, accept.
 - d) If the donor has tested **positive** for the presence of Coronavirus but has not had symptoms of Coronavirus infection, and it is at least 28 days from the date of their last positive test, accept. (A subsequent negative test for the presence of Coronavirus does not shorten this 28-day deferral.)

2. Person who has been in isolation

Includes Self-isolation and/or household isolation for symptoms of possible Coronavirus infection or donors who have been advised to isolate after contact or travel.

Excludes Donors with symptoms of Coronavirus infection (see [section 2](#) above).

Obligatory **Must not donate if:**
Less than 14 days from the first day of isolation.

- Discretionary* ~~If it is at least 14 days since the first day of isolation, accept~~
~~• resolution of any symptoms (if relevant)~~
And
- a) If it is at least 14 days since the first day of isolation and the donor remains well, accept
 - b) If the donor has been advised that isolation is no longer required and the donor remains well, accept

3. Contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus infection

Discretionary If the donor has not been **asked required** to isolate and they remain well with no symptoms of Coronavirus infection and they agree to report any post donation illness, accept.

4. Donors of COVID-19 convalescent plasma

Obligatory **Must not donate if** less than **28 days** since resolution of symptoms

Discretionary If at least 28 days since resolution of symptoms, accept.

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Additional Information

Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for transfusion recipients. Since 2002 there have been outbreaks in humans of new strains of coronavirus, associated with severe pulmonary infections and mortality rates of 10-35% e.g. SARS and MERS.

COVID-19 is an illness characterised by respiratory symptoms, including coughing and breathlessness, [the loss of smell and/or taste](#), and fever. It is caused by infection with a newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. During the 2020 pandemic, individuals with possible COVID-19 have been asked to isolate at home to limit spread of this virus.

[Donors who are known to have antibodies to Coronavirus are eligible to donate provided they have not had symptoms of Coronavirus Infection in the last 28 days.](#)

[Donors who have had screening for the presence of Coronavirus for reasons other than suspected infection or contact \(e.g. research\) can be accepted to donate provided they have not had symptoms of Coronavirus Infection or a positive result.](#)

[Donors of convalescent plasma are asked to wait 28 days from resolution of symptoms to give time for antibody levels to rise before their first plasma donation.](#)

Post donation illness

There is no evidence at present that coronaviruses can be transmitted by blood transfusion and therefore these measures are precautionary. Donors must be provided with information about contacting the blood service if they develop any illness after blood or component donation.

It is only necessary to recall the donations from donors who report symptoms of Coronavirus infection if these symptoms start on or before the fifth day after donation.

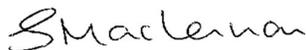
Information

This is a requirement of the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005.

Reason for Change

~~This entry has been rewritten to take account of changes in the UK response to the 2020 COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.~~

The deferral after confirmed Coronavirus infection has been increased to 28 days. This is in keeping with revised guidance from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The UK case definition for COVID-19 now includes the loss of smell and/or taste. Guidance on the interval before convalescent plasma donation has been included.



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