

Issued by JPAC: 07 April 2022

Implementation: To be determined by each Service

Change Notification UK National Blood Services No. 29 - 2022

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

These changes apply to the Whole Blood and Component Donor Selection Guidelines.

Please amend the following entries as shown.

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

<i>Includes:</i>	COVID-19 disease due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV
<i>Definitions:</i>	<p>Symptoms of COVID-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • New persistent cough • Loss, or change in sense of smell and/or taste <p>Testing: PCR (polymerase chain reaction) and rapid lateral flow tests (LFTs), usually by throat and/or nose swab, to detect the presence of SARS-CoV-2. This does not include testing for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2.</p> <p>Confirmed Infection: The donor has had a positive test for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 (Coronavirus)</p> <p>Recovery from COVID-19: Donors can be considered to have recovered if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are generally well and back to normal activities • Do not have continuing fatigue which affects daily activities • Do not have a fever • Do not have respiratory symptoms (except for a persistent mild cough) • Are not experiencing cardiac symptoms (e.g. chest pain, palpitations) • Are not experiencing any other symptoms e.g. peripheral neurological symptoms in upper or lower limbs, central neurological symptoms such as headache, dizziness. <p>Some individuals may have a mild 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.</p>
1. Affected Individual	
<i>Obligatory:</i>	Must not donate.

<i>Discretionary</i> :	<p>a) If the donor had symptoms of COVID-19 and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the donor has had a positive test for SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus), and any period of isolation has finished, and no further testing is required, and it is at least seven days from the resolution of symptoms, <p>accept</p> <p>b) If the donor had symptoms of COVID-19 and the donor had a negative PCR test for SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) infection, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no further testing is required, and any period of isolation has finished, and all symptoms have resolved, <p>accept</p> <p>If the donor had symptoms of COVID-19 and the donor had a negative LFT for SARS-COV-2 and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no PCR test was taken, and any period of isolation has finished, and no further testing is required, and it is at least seven days from the resolution of symptoms, <p>accept</p> <p>c) If the donor had symptoms of COVID-19 and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the donor has not been tested for the presence of SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus), or the donor had a test but is not aware of the result, <p>When it is as least seven days from the resolution of symptoms, accept</p> <p>d) If the donor tested positive for the presence of SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) but has not had symptoms of COVID-19 and any period of isolation is finished, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no further testing is required, and the donor remains well, and it is at least ten seven days since the last positive test was taken, <p>accept</p>
2. Person who has been in contact with COVID-19	
<i>Includes:</i>	Donors who have been in contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.
<i>Excludes:</i>	Donors with symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). Donors who have had a positive test for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 (see above) Donors who have been in contact with individuals who are contacts of confirmed or suspected COVID-19.
<i>Obligatory:</i>	Must not donate if: Less than ten days from the last day of contact
<i>Discretionary</i> :	<p>a) If it is at least ten days since the last day of contact and the donor remains well, accept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) If the donor has been advised: that any isolation period is now complete, or that isolation is not required, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • post-contact testing is complete, and the results are negative, and • no further testing is required, and • the donor remains well and they agree to report any post donation illness, <p>accept</p>
<i>Additional Information:</i>	<p>For donors who have had household contact with a case of COVID-19, the last day of contact is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the last day that the contact had symptoms of COVID-19, or • If the contact did not have symptoms of COVID-19, the date of the contact's last positive test for SARS-CoV-2
3. Person requiring isolation, quarantine or testing after travel	
<i>Includes:</i>	<p>Donors required to isolate, quarantine or undertake testing after travel</p> <p>Donors who have returned from a quarantine country but are exempt from quarantine due to their job.</p>
<i>Excludes:</i>	<p>Donors with symptoms of COVID-19 (see above)</p> <p>Donors who have had a positive test for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 (see above)</p>
<i>Obligatory:</i>	<p>a) Must not donate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any testing after travel has not been completed, or • the results of testing are not negative, or • the results of testing are not known <p>b) Must not donate while the donor is required to isolate or quarantine after arriving in the UK</p>
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>If the donor has been advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that a period of isolation or quarantine is not required, or that any quarantine or isolation period is complete, and • any testing following travel is negative and no further testing is required, and • the donor remains well, <p>accept.</p>
4. 2. Person having routine surveillance testing for SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) infection.	
<i>Excludes</i>	<p>Donors requiring testing because of symptoms, contact or travel (see sections 1, 2 and 3 above).</p>
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>Donors who have regular testing for the presence of SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) can be accepted to donate provided they have not had a positive test for the SARS-CoV-2 or symptoms of COVID-19 in the last ten seven days.</p> <p>This includes donors who work in a Health, Social Care or Educational setting.</p>

5- 3. SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) Vaccination	
<i>Obligatory:</i>	Must not donate if: Less than 48 hours after the most recent immunisation was given.
<i>Discretionary</i> :	<p>a) If it is at least 48 hours have passed since the most recent immunisation was given, and the donor is well, with no ongoing local or systemic reaction to the vaccine, accept</p> <p>b) If the vaccine was given as part of an approved clinical trial and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more than 48 hours have passed since the most recent immunisation was given, and • the donor is well, with no ongoing local or systemic reaction to the vaccine, and • any deferral period specified in the study protocol has passed, accept
<i>See if Relevant:</i>	Clinical Trials Immunisation – Non-live Infection - Acute
<i>Additional Information:</i>	<p>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.</p> <p>COVID-19 is an illness caused by infection with a newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Some individuals will have symptoms for a protracted length of time after the systemic and respiratory symptoms of the acute infection have resolved. A wide range of symptoms, including cardiac and neurological, have been reported. Donors may not realise the importance of declaring some symptoms. It is important to identify any of the specific ongoing symptoms such as chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, fatigue, even if seemingly mild or infrequent, that suggest that a donor may not have fully recovered to their pre-COVID-19 state of health, and that may put a donor at risk of an adverse event.</p> <p>This entry has been revised several times during the COVID-19 pandemic in response to evolving evidence and changes in public health and government advice. The list of COVID19 symptoms in this entry is taken from UK Health Security Agency (fever, cough and loss of taste/smell). Not all individuals with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection report these symptoms. But if the donor has recovered from symptoms of a cold or upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) and has had a negative PCR test for SARS-CoV-2, it seems likely they had a common cold or URTI. The acute infection entry within this DSG has provision to accept donors who have recovered from a simple cold or URTI within two weeks of recovery. This is supported by the lack of evidence that respiratory viruses are transmitted by transfusion. The different deferral periods after negative PCR and LFT tests reflect the different sensitivities of these methods.</p> <p>The obligatory deferral period after contact with COVID-19 has been set as 10 days; this is approximately twice the median incubation period of SARS-CoV-2 (five to six days) and is consistent with other entries in the DSG.</p>

	<p>The guidance within this entry is focussed on COVID-19. Donors who report MERS or SARS, or contact with these infections, should be referred to a DCSO.</p> <p>Individuals vaccinated with inactivated viruses or vaccines that do not contain live agents can usually be accepted without any deferral. COVID-19 vaccines currently licensed in the UK, including the AstraZeneca, Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines, are non-live and as such do not pose a transfusion safety risk. Nevertheless, as these are new vaccines, a 48-hour deferral after immunisation is recommended to ensure donor and donation safety. This will also reduce the risk of a donation being discarded if a vaccine recipient develops symptoms directly related to the vaccine after donation.</p> <p>Several other coronavirus vaccines are currently under review by regulatory authorities in the UK and elsewhere. Donor selection guidelines will be reviewed when any new COVID-19 vaccine is approved for use in the UK.</p>
<p><i>Post Donation Information:</i></p>	<p>There is no evidence at present that coronaviruses can be transmitted by blood transfusion and therefore these measures are precautionary.</p> <p>Donors must be provided with information about contacting the blood service if they develop any illness after blood or component donation.</p> <p>Donors may inform the blood service that they have received advice since donation to isolate due to contact prior to donation. They may have been advised to have a test for Coronavirus.</p> <p>It is only necessary to recall the donations from donors who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report symptoms of COVID-19 starting within 48 hours of donation, and/or • have tested positive for the presence of SARS-COV-2 (Coronavirus) when the sample was taken within 48 hours of donation
<p><i>Reason for change:</i></p>	<p>Extensive revision of entry. The deferral after confirmed infection, contact and vaccination have been reduced. Clarifications that testing after infection, contact and travel must be complete before the donor is accepted, have been added. Specific guidance on household contacts has been added. The time period for post donation recall has been reduced. Reference to convalescent plasma donation has been removed.</p> <p>The obligatory time-based deferral after contact with a case of COVID-19 and guidance regarding quarantine and travel have been removed. The deferral for asymptomatic donors who have tested positive for Coronavirus has been reduced to seven days.</p>

SmacLennan

Dr Sheila MacLennan
Professional Director - Joint UKBTS Professional Advisory Committee
✉ sheila.maclennan@nhsbt.nhs.uk