

Change Notification for the UK Blood Transfusion Services

Date of Issue: 15 November 2023

Implementation: to be determined by each Service

No. 33 – 2023

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

This notification includes the following changes:

	BM-DSG Bone Marrow & Peripheral Blood Stem Cell	CB-DSG Cord Blood	GDRI Geographical Disease Risk Index	TD-DSG Tissue - Deceased Donors	TL-DSG Tissue - Live Donors	WB-DSG Whole Blood & Components	Red Book Guidelines for the BTS in the UK
1 Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●



Dr Akila Chandrasekar
Chair of Standing Advisory Committee on Tissues & Cellular Therapy Products (SACTCTP)



Dr Stephen Thomas
Professional Director of JPAC

Changes are indicated using the key below. This formatting will not appear in the final entry.

original text

«inserted text»

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BM-DSG	CB-DSG	GDRI	TD-DSG	TL-DSG	WB-DSG	Red Book
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1.1 Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19) ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

(revised entry)

<i>Includes</i>	COVID-19 disease (due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV).
<i>Definition</i>	<p>Symptoms of Covid-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recent onset of a new, continuous cough ● High temperature ● Loss of, or a change in, normal sense of taste or smell <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>Suspected Infection: Compatible symptoms as per UK GOV definition given above and who has not been tested or is awaiting test result.</p> <p>Recovery from Covid-19 symptoms: 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 cough or reduced sense of smell or taste for some weeks after resolution of their infection, but can be considered as recovered for the purposes of tissue and cell donation.</p>

1. Person with confirmed symptomatic COVID-19	
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if less than 14 days since resolution of symptoms
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>a) If more than 14 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, accept.</p> <p>b) If less than 14 days since resolution of symptoms: refer to designated clinical support officer for individual risk assessment, if donation is urgent and cannot be delayed.</p> <p>See additional information.</p>
2. Person with confirmed SARS-CoV-2	
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if less than 14 days since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test.
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>If less than 14 days have passed since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test, refer to designated clinical support officer for individual risk assessment, if donation is urgent and cannot be delayed.</p> <p>See additional information.</p>
3. Person with suspected COVID-19	
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>a) If more than 14 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, and donor has been tested and advised they do not have COVID-19, and the donor remains well, accept.</p> <p>b) If less than 14 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor has been tested and advised they do not have COVID-19, and the donor remains well. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the donor has not been tested to exclude the diagnosis of COVID-19. <p>Refer to designated clinical support officer for advice</p>
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<p><u>Coronavirus Vaccination</u></p> <p><u>Infection - Acute</u></p> <p><u>Contact with Infectious Diseases</u></p>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<p>Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for tissue transplant 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 characterised by respiratory symptoms, including coughing and breathlessness, and fever. It is caused by infection with a</p>

	<p>newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Its full pathogenesis remains unknown but individuals with certain underlying chronic conditions, the elderly and immunocompromised individuals are at risk of more severe disease.</p> <p>Some persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection may be asymptomatic. It is possible that they may have undergone testing for occupational health reasons (for example).</p> <p>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. 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>«NICE guidelines recommend» It is recommended that all bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cell donors, including those without symptoms or diagnosis of COVID-19 are tested for «SARS-CoV-2 prior to donation.» the presence of viral RNA before donation. Donor must have tested negative for the presence of the viral RNA in the upper respiratory tract. «Please refer to the current NICE guidelines for up-to-date recommendations.»</p> <p>There is no evidence at present that SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted by tissue/cell transplantation and therefore these measures are considered to be precautionary.</p> <p>For Bone Marrow (HPC-M) donations, donation should be scheduled in accordance with current guidance from the Royal College of Surgeons and Association of Anaesthetists and in discussion with the collection centre.</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 guidance within this entry is focussed on COVID-19. Donors who report infection or contact should be referred to a designated clinical support officer.</p>
<p><i>Post Donation Illness</i></p>	<p>Donors must be provided with information about contacting the registry co-ordinating their donation and the collection centre they donated at if they develop any illness within 14 days after donation.</p>
<p><i>Reason for Change</i></p>	<p>«Delete outdated information in the definition section, and ‘additional information’ section. ‘Additional Information’ section updated to refer to current NICE guidelines for testing donors without symptoms or diagnosis of COVID-19.»</p> <p>To add information regarding the Royal College of Anaesthetists guidance, delete link to BSBMT guidance, and add link to ‘Contact with Infectious Disease’ entry in ‘See if Relevant’ section.</p>

BM-DSG	CB-DSG	GDR1	TD-DSG	TL-DSG	WB-DSG	Red Book
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1.2 Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

(revised entry)

<i>Includes</i>	COVID-19 disease (due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV).														
<i>Definition</i>	<p>Symptoms of Covid-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent onset of a new, continuous cough • High temperature • Loss of, or a change in, normal sense of taste or smell <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>Suspected Infection: Compatible symptoms as per UK GOV definition given above and who has not been tested or is awaiting test result.</p> <p>Recovery from COVID-19 symptoms:</p> <p>In line with Public Health England advice, donors can be considered to have recovered if they are well and free of fever and respiratory symptoms. Some individuals may have a cough or reduced sense of smell or taste for some weeks after resolution of their infection, but can be considered as recovered for the purposes of tissue and cell donation.</p>														
<table border="1"> <tr> <th colspan="2">1. Person with confirmed symptomatic COVID-19</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>Obligatory</i></td> <td>Must not donate if less than 7 days since resolution of symptoms</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>Discretionary</i></td> <td>If more than 7 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, and the donor remains well, accept.</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2">2. Person with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 without symptoms</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>Obligatory</i></td> <td>Must not donate if less than 7 days since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>Discretionary</i></td> <td>If more than 7 days have passed since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test, accept.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>See additional information.</td> </tr> </table>		1. Person with confirmed symptomatic COVID-19		<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if less than 7 days since resolution of symptoms	<i>Discretionary</i>	If more than 7 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, and the donor remains well, accept.	2. Person with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 without symptoms		<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if less than 7 days since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test.	<i>Discretionary</i>	If more than 7 days have passed since confirmation of infection by positive results in a diagnostic test, accept.		See additional information.
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3. Person with suspected COVID-19	
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if less than 14 days since resolution of symptoms
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>a) If testing was not performed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more than 14 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, and the donor remains well, accept. • If more than 7 days but less than 14 days, see <u>Infection - Acute</u> entry. <p>or</p> <p>b) If testing was performed, and COVID-19 has been ruled out as a clinical diagnosis, see <u>Infection - Acute</u> entry.</p>
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<p><u>Coronavirus Vaccination</u></p> <p><u>Infection - Acute</u></p> <p><u>Contact with Infectious Diseases</u></p>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<p>Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for tissue transplant 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 characterised by respiratory symptoms, including coughing and breathlessness, and fever. It is caused by infection with a newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Its full pathogenesis remains unknown but individuals with certain underlying chronic conditions, the elderly and immunocompromised individuals are at risk of more severe disease.</p> <p>Some persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection may be asymptomatic. It is possible that they may have undergone testing for occupational health reasons (for example). Routine screening of living asymptomatic tissue/cell donors is not necessary. They are likely to have been screened before hospital admission for a planned procedure as per hospital policy.</p> <p>There is no evidence at present that SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted by tissue/ cell transplantation and therefore these measures are considered to be precautionary.</p> <p><i>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 guidance within this entry is focussed on COVID-19. Donors who report infection or contact should be referred to a designated clinical support officer.</i></p>
<i>Post Donation Illness</i>	Donors must be provided with information about contacting the tissue establishment if they develop any illness within 14 days after donation.
<i>Reason for Change</i>	<p>«Delete outdated information in the definition section, and ‘additional information’ section.»</p> <p><i>Addition of links to the ‘Contact with Infectious Disease’ entry in the ‘See if Relevant’ section.</i></p>

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1.3 Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

(revised entry)

<i>Includes</i>	COVID-19 disease (due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV).
<i>Definition</i>	<p>Symptoms of COVID-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent onset of a new, continuous cough • High temperature • Loss of, or a change in, normal sense of taste or smell <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>Suspected Infection: Compatible symptoms as per UK GOV definition given above and who has not been tested or is awaiting test result.</p> <p>Recovery from Coronavirus symptoms: In line with Public Health England advice, donors can be considered to have recovered if they are well and free of fever and respiratory symptoms. Some individuals may have a cough or reduced sense of smell or taste for some weeks after resolution of their infection, but can be considered as recovered for the purposes of tissue and cell donation.</p>
1. Person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19	
<i>Obligatory</i>	<p>Must not donate if:</p> <p>a) Less than 7 days since resolution of symptoms due to confirmed «or suspected» COVID-19.</p> <p>b) Awaiting test results for suspected COVID-19.</p>
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>«Eyes – Accept. See Additional Information.</p> <p>For all other tissues:»</p> <p>a) Confirmed symptomatic infection (COVID-19) – if more than 7 days have passed since resolution of symptoms, accept.</p>

	<p>b) Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection following diagnostic test without clinical symptoms - if more than 7 days have passed since most recent confirmed diagnostic test, accept.</p> <p>c) Suspected infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If testing was not performed, and if more than 7 days after resolution of symptoms, see <u>Infection - Acute</u> entry. • If testing was performed, and COVID-19 has been ruled out as a clinical diagnosis, see <u>Infection - Acute</u> entry. <p>d) For respiratory symptoms/failure not related to infection, or where COVID-19 was ruled out as a clinical diagnosis following testing, and if the underlying cause does not otherwise contradict donation, accept.</p> <p>See Additional Information below.</p>
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<p><u>Coronavirus Vaccination</u></p> <p><u>Infection - Acute</u></p> <p><u>Contact with Infectious Diseases</u></p>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<p>Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for tissue transplant 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 characterised by respiratory symptoms, including coughing and breathlessness, and fever. It is caused by infection with a newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Its full pathogenesis remains unknown but individuals with certain underlying chronic conditions, the elderly and immunocompromised individuals are at risk of more severe disease.</p> <p>Some persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection may be asymptomatic. It is possible that they may have undergone testing for occupational health reasons (for example).</p> <p>Deceased tissue donors may have been subject to respiratory swab testing either on admission to hospital, or as organ donors. All organ donors are tested for SARS-CoV-2 on respiratory samples prior to donation. It is important to ascertain that, if the donor has been tested, the test was negative before proceeding with retrieval of tissues.</p> <p>There is no evidence at present that SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted by tissue/ cell transplantation and therefore these measures are considered to be precautionary. «Based on expert opinion COVID-19 infection is not a contraindication for eye donation, where the decontamination process includes a suitable virus inactivation step.»</p>

	<i>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 guidance within this entry is focussed on COVID-19.</i>
<i>Reason for Change</i>	<p>«Delete outdated information in the definition section, and 'additional information' section. Reword 'obligatory' section and update 'discretionary' section.»</p> <p><i>Addition of links to the 'Infection – Acute' and 'Contact with Infectious Disease' entries in the 'See if Relevant' section.</i></p>