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Implementation: To be determined by each Service

Change Notification UK National Blood Services No. 64 - 2020

Coronavirus Infection

This change applies to the Whole Blood and Components Donor Selection Guidelines

Please make the following changes to the entry:

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| <i>Includes</i> | 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) |
| <i>Definition</i> | <p>Symptoms of Coronavirus infection include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • New persistent cough • Loss, or change in sense of smell and/or taste <p>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.</p> <p>Recovery from Coronavirus symptoms infection: 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> |

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1. Affected Individual

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

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~~ Person who has been in contact with Coronavirus infection

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.~~
Donors who have been in contact with a confirmed or suspected case of Coronavirus infection.

Excludes Donors with symptoms of Coronavirus infection (see above).

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

- Discretionary**
- 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.
 - c) If the donor has not been required to isolate and they remain well and they agree to report any post donation illness, accept.

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3. ~~Contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus infection~~ **Person requiring isolation or quarantine after travel**

- Includes** Donors required to isolate or quarantine after travel.
Donors who have returned from a quarantine country but are exempt from quarantine due to their job.
- Excludes** Donors with symptoms of Coronavirus infection (see above).
- Obligatory** **Must not donate if:**
a) Less than 14 days from the first day of isolation or quarantine.
b) Less than 14 days from the date of return to the UK for a donor who is exempt from quarantine for job purposes.
- Discretionary** ~~If the donor has not been required to isolate and they remain well with no symptoms of Coronavirus infection and they agree to report any post donation illness, accept~~
If it is at least 14 days since the first day of isolation or quarantine and the donor remains well, 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.

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.

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.

~~During the 2020 pandemic, individuals with possible COVID-19 have been asked to isolate at home to limit spread of this virus.~~

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| | <p>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.</p> <p>Donors who have had screening for the presence of Coronavirus for reasons other than suspected infection or contact (e.g. research occupational) can be accepted to donate provided they have not had symptoms of Coronavirus Infection or a positive result a positive test for the virus or symptoms of Coronavirus in the last 28 days.</p> <p>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. Donors who have travelled may be required to self-isolate (also termed quarantine) on their entry into the UK. This will depend on country or area of a country travelled from, and when the entry into the UK occurred. Donors will be aware of the UK border rules at the time of their travel. Some donors may be exempt from self-isolation due to the jobs they do; this exemption does not apply to donating blood.</p> |
| See if Relevant | Clinical Trials Transfusion |
| Post Donation Illness Information | <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 Coronavirus infection if these symptoms start starting on or before the fifth day after donation. <p>And/or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have tested positive for the presence of Coronavirus on or before the fifth day after donation. |
| Information | This is a requirement of the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005. |
| Reason for change | Specific guidance on self-isolation after travel and use of the term quarantine has been included. Additions to definition of recovery from Coronavirus symptoms. Clarification of relevant post donation information. |

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~~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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