

Guidelines for health care workers after the onset of respiratory infection symptoms

All health care workers with a respiratory illness who are unable to perform their duties must follow the department's established sick leave process and notify their immediate supervisor.

- **Health care workers who require testing for clinical evaluation should contact their health care provider, eVisitNB or call Tele-Care 811.**
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Health care workers who develop new, mild respiratory infection symptoms of unknown origin

- A respiratory infection is considered **mild** if you have **no cough or fever** and feel well enough to work.
 - Upon returning to work, you must **wear a mask at all times** (except when eating or drinking), practice **strict hand hygiene** and, if possible, **eat your meals in a private space**. If this is not possible, maintain **at least two metres of physical distance** when eating or drinking **until the 10th day after the onset of symptoms**.
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Health care workers presenting with new moderate respiratory symptoms of unknown origin OR with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, influenza or RSV (PCR-positive)

- Respiratory symptoms are considered **moderate** if you have a **fever OR a cough, OR feel too unwell to work**.
 - Notify your manager and, in case of a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, influenza or RSV, complete the **KICS** form to receive the necessary instructions.
 - If diagnosed with RSV, you may return to work, provided that you follow guidelines for workers with mild symptoms.
 - **Stay home** from work for **seven days** after your symptoms appear if you have a **confirmed diagnosis of COVID 19 or influenza**. Return to work is permitted on **day 8**, provided you **wear a mask at all times** (except when eating or drinking), **practice strict hand hygiene**, and, if possible, **eat in a private space** (or maintain at least two metres of physical distance) **until day 10 after the onset of symptoms**.
 - If an **earlier return to work is necessary due to critical staff shortage OR** following a negative PCR test, you may return to work **before day 8**, provided you **have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication** and your symptoms are improving. Follow the above precautions **until 10 days after the onset of symptoms**.
 - The return-to-work date is **determined jointly between the manager and the employee**, based on the above guidelines, and considering that people are generally **less contagious after the fifth day** following the onset of symptoms.
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References:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2.
- Public Health Agency of Canada. Infection prevention and control measures for healthcare workers in acute care and long-term care settings.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevention Strategies for Seasonal Influenza in Healthcare Settings, revised May 13, 2021.

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