

COVID-19 Glossary of Terms – November 9, 2020

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Since it was first named by the World Health Organization in February 2020, COVID-19 has entered our lives and changed our vernacular. Here are some commonly used COVID-19 terms and their meaning.

Aerosol generating procedure (AGP)

Aerosols are liquid or solid particles suspended in air in the form of small or large droplets. Some procedures performed on patients are more likely to generate higher concentrations of infectious respiratory aerosols than the patient creates regularly from coughing, sneezing, talking or breathing. Such procedures carry increased risk for exposure of infectious material. Some examples include CPR, intubation/extubation, bronchoscopy and nebulizer treatments.

Antibodies

An antibody is a protein component of the immune system that circulates in the blood and recognizes foreign substances like bacteria and viruses. After exposure to a foreign substance, called an antigen, antibodies develop and circulate in the blood. Some types of antibodies provide protection against future exposures to that antigen (neutralizing antibodies).

Antibody (serology) test (for COVID-19)

The serology (blood serum) test that indicates whether an individual has been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. The blood test can detect a previous COVID-19 infection through the presence of antibodies. It helps to give a better picture of the true spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

Antigen test (for SARS-CoV-2)

Rapid antigen tests are commonly used in the diagnosis of respiratory pathogens. The FDA has granted emergency use authorization for antigen tests that can identify SARS-CoV-2. Antigen testing utilizes immunoassays that detect the presence of a specific viral antigen, which implies current viral infection. The test detects specific proteins on the surface of the virus and can identify people who are at the peak of infection. Results can be determined in approximately 15 minutes.

Contact tracing

Anyone who comes into contact with someone who has COVID-19 is at an increased risk of becoming infected themselves, and of potentially infecting others. Contact tracing can help prevent further transmission of the virus by quickly identifying and informing people who may have been infected and contagious, so they can take steps to not infect others. Contact tracing lets people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and that they should monitor their health for signs and symptoms of the disease.

Convalescent plasma

Spectrum Health was the first health system in Michigan to offer convalescent plasma therapy as a treatment option for COVID-19. Patients who have recovered from COVID-19 and meet the criteria, can donate plasma that will be transfused to critically-ill patients to help boost their immune system. Small control studies from across the nation, coordinated by the National COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Project, suggest that convalescent plasma improves outcomes in patients with the COVID-19 virus.

Convalescent Plasma in Outpatients with COVID-19 (C3PO)

The clinical trial of COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma in Outpatients (C3PO) is a multi-center randomized, single blind, two arm, placebo controlled phase three trial with blinded outcome assessment to establish the safety and efficacy of a single dose of convalescent plasma for preventing the progression of mild to severe COVID-19 illness.

Coronavirus

Coronaviruses are named for crown-like spikes on their surface. They are a type of virus. There are many different kinds, and some cause disease. The newly identified coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, has caused a worldwide pandemic or respiratory illness, called COVID-19.

COVID-19

On Feb. 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China. The name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. The 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as 2019 novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV. It also is known as SARS-CoV-2.

COVID-19 Information Center

This is an internal [online resource](#) for Spectrum Health team members hosted on the SharePoint intranet platform. Important communications from the system command center and the supporting workgroups are housed here for easy reference. Categories of guidance, standard work and resources include: clinical education and training, central staffing office resources, clinical resources, non-clinical resources, ambulatory resources, personal protective equipment (PPE), infection prevention toolkits, access management, team member support resources, virtual health considerations and more. Team members also can find an archive of all COVID-19 updates, videos and town halls here.

COVID-19 Resource Center

This is an external [online resource](#) for the public hosted on Spectrum Health's public website. It details how we are working to support our community through the pandemic, and includes information on ways to get care, testing information, frequently asked questions about COVID-19, visitor restrictions, giving opportunities, community resources, employer resources, school resources, health care professionals resources, and more. Informational resources are provided in a variety of languages.

Exposure

The state of being exposed to something. The standard exposure timeframe for COVID-19 is fifteen minutes or more, unmasked, around a person who has COVID-19.

Fit testing

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires an annual respirator fit test to confirm the size and fit of any respirator that forms a tight seal on the wearer's face before it is used in the workplace. This ensures users are receiving the expected level of protection by minimizing any contaminant leakage into the facepiece.

Flattening the curve

Refers to using protective practices to slow the rate of COVID-19 infections so hospitals have enough room, supplies and health care professionals for all of the patients who need care. On a graph, a sudden surge in patients over short period of time could be represented as a tall, narrow curve. If the same number of patients arrived at the hospital at a slower rate over a longer period of time, the line of the graph would look like a longer, flatter curve.

Gaiter

A neck gaiter is a wide tube of fabric worn around the neck instead of over the ears, and can easily be pulled up and down to cover and uncover the mouth and nose as desired. The material, the fit and whether the person is properly wearing the gaiter will impact its effectiveness as a face covering.

Hot zone boss

A hot zone boss is someone who has received training on how to assist team members who are entering and leaving patients' rooms to ensure they are using the personal protective equipment appropriately, and verify that they are putting it on and taking it off correctly to minimize risk of contamination.

Hydroxychloroquine

A prescription drug used to treat many autoimmune disorders. It was first used to treat malaria. There is much public discussion and some misinformation about the use of hydroxychloroquine as an effective treatment in cases of COVID-19. Given the prevailing data, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and scientific community have determined there is no evidence of benefit from hydroxychloroquine in treating COVID-19, and there may be a chance for harm from its cardiovascular effects.

Isolation mask

A single-use disposable face mask designed to create a physical barrier between the mouth and the nose, isolation masks help protect against larger respiratory droplets, splashes or germ particles that contain viruses and bacteria.

MIOSHA

Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) strives to work collaboratively with employers and employees to better prevent workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities. MIOSHA health and safety activities include: setting and enforcing occupational safety and health standards; providing extensive safety and health training and education; and working with partners to develop innovative programs to prevent workplace hazards. The MIOSHA mission is to help protect the safety and health of Michigan workers.

Molecular (PCR) test or batch PCR test for COVID-19

This test detects genetic material of a virus using a lab technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). This test is used to detect the presence of SARS-CoV-2 virus RNA in the respiratory tract through molecular-based diagnostics. A sample is collected via nasal or nasopharyngeal swab to determine if a person currently carries the virus.

N95 respirator

A respiratory protective device designed to achieve a very close facial fit and very efficient filtration of airborne particles. The edges of the respirator are designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth.

Nares

Nares is another word for the nostrils or nasal passages. Nasal sampling is less invasive and results in less patient discomfort.

Nasopharyngeal

Collection of specimens from the surface of the respiratory mucosa using a long swab that can sample secretions from the upper most part of the throat, behind the nose.

Novel coronavirus

A new coronavirus that has not been previously identified or previously been seen in humans.

PAPR

Powered air purifying respirator (PAPR) worn for high-risk, aerosol-generating procedures. It uses a blower to force air through filter cartridges or canisters and into the breathing zone of the wearer. This process creates an air flow inside either a tight-fitting facepiece or loose-fitting hood or helmet, providing a higher assigned protection factor than other options.

Patient-facing

Spectrum Health team members who routinely interact directly, in person, with patients.

PPE

Personal protective equipment used by health care professionals to protect themselves, patients and others when providing care. PPE helps protect health care workers from potentially infectious patients and materials, toxic medications and other potentially dangerous substances used in health care delivery. Examples of PPE include gloves, gowns, masks, goggles and face shields.

Person/patient under investigation (PUI)

A person who has symptoms that meet certain clinical criteria, such as fever and/or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness. The person is suspected to have COVID-19 and will be considered a PUI until testing can confirm or rule out the diagnosis.

Point of care testing (POC or POCT)

Medical testing that is performed at the time and place of patient care, rather than in an off-site clinical laboratory, leading to a possible change in the care of a patient.

Recoveries

Patients who have been confirmed as COVID-19 positive, who have been hospitalized and now discharged.

Remdesivir

An anti-viral agent. Based on preliminary clinical trial data, the investigational anti-viral agent remdesivir is recommended for the treatment of COVID-19 in hospitalized patients with severe disease.

Screening

Screening can help people determine if they qualify for or should be tested for COVID-19. Screening involves self-attesting to a series of health-related questions designed to determine if a person is exhibiting signs or symptoms of the disease. There are multiple screening options such as in person with a primary care provider, virtually on a platform like mychart.spectrumhealth.org, or over the phone via a screening hotline such as Spectrum Health's COVID-19 screening hotline at 833.559.0659.

Skilled nursing facility (SNF)

Skilled nursing facility, nursing home and convalescent home are all terms used to describe a residential facility that provides 24-hour medical care on-site.

Social distance

Putting physical space between yourself and others as much as possible. It is recommended that people stay at least six feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people to avoid catching a disease such as COVID-19.

Surge capacity

A measurable representation of the ability to manage a sudden influx of patients. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Spectrum Health is monitoring our levels of hospitalized patients, ICU (intensive care unit)

beds and ventilators to determine our current capacity levels. We have detailed plans in place to help mitigate the impact should a surge beyond capacity in any of these critical areas occur.

Surge model

Surge models are predictive models that use data to forecast if and when capacity in a certain area may be exceeded. Spectrum Health has developed its own surge model that predicts if and when we would surge beyond capacity in hospitalized patients, ICU beds and ventilators. We use a cross-validation method that assesses how well our predictive model works. This helps us to monitor our models closely to validate their accuracy, instilling confidence in our projections over a certain period of time.

Suspect

A patient who, based on signs and symptoms, may have the virus that causes COVID-19. Suspect patients will be tested for COVID-19 and if the test is confirmed as positive for COVID-19, the patient will be moved from a suspected case to a positive case.

System Command Center (SCC)

The Spectrum Health System Command Center (SCC) is a centralized location for decision making and resource coordination during a crisis situation. Opened in February 2020 for the COVID-19 response, the SCC has a 24x7 call center and is managed by the Business Assurance team. The SCC is located at the Spectrum Health Medical Center also operates virtually through its advanced technology which connects all Spectrum Health hospitals.

Quarantine

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. It helps to prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health and follow the directions of their state or local health department.

Team member

Spectrum Health team members include:

- **Employed team member:** an individual on Spectrum Health's payroll who may also receive benefits, if eligible, directly from Spectrum Health; may also be referred to as employee.
- **Non-employed team member:** an individual who is not employed by a Spectrum Health entity but who works or provides services on behalf of Spectrum Health or on behalf of another organization; may also be referred to as non-employee or extended team member. This group includes students/advanced degree clinical learners, volunteers, allied health professionals, non-employed providers, contractors and agency staff.

Vaccine clinical trials

Rigorous clinical trials ensure that an approved vaccine will be safe and effective. First, a vaccine is tested in animals to see if it works and if it is safe. The testing must follow strict lab guidelines and generally takes three to six months. Next comes testing in humans. Small phase I clinical trials evaluate the safety of the vaccine in humans. During phase II, the formulation and doses of the vaccine are established to prove the vaccine's effectiveness. Finally, during phase III, the safety and efficacy of a vaccine need to be demonstrated in a larger group of people.

Virtual care

Virtual care is a broad term that encompasses all the ways health care providers remotely interact with their patients when they are not physically present with each other. In addition to treating patients via telemedicine (video-conferencing tools), providers may use live video, audio and instant messaging to communicate with their patients remotely.