

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) The Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi

29 February 2020

This document is subject to change as the situation evolves and more information becomes available.

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Questions and Answers

1 About COVID-19

1.1 What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the official name of the disease caused by the virus SARS CoV-2, formerly known as Novel Coronavirus. This is a new strain from the coronavirus family.

1.2 How does SARS CoV-2 (COVID-19) spread?

SARS CoV-2 spreads through droplets which are released when people sneeze or cough. These droplets can only travel up to 1 meter.

1.3 What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The two main symptoms of COVID-19 are fever and cough.

1.4 How long is the incubation period for COVID-19?

Incubation period is the time between catching the virus and when the symptoms of the disease start appearing. Most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range between 1 and 14 days.

1.5 How do I know if I have COVID-19 and not regular cold or flu?

The only way to know if you suffer from COVID-19 is through a special lab test.

1.6 Can COVID-19 be treated with antibiotics?

No. COVID-19 is caused by a virus and antibiotics only work on bacterial infections.

1.7 Is there any particular treatment for COVID-19?

There is no treatment for COVID-19 yet. The disease is treated symptomatically, which means the symptoms (such as fever and cough) are treated rather than the disease itself.

1.8 How serious is COVID-19?

COVID 19 usually causes a mild to moderate respiratory (lung) infection. In the elderly or those who are immunocompromised or have other chronic diseases, it may lead to a severe pneumonia and can be fatal. The disease has proven fatal in about 2% of COVID-19 patients; 98% of those infected have recovered.

2 Confirmation of COVID-19 Cases

2.1 How is COVID-19 confirmed in a patient?

Suspected or probable cases of COVID-19 are confirmed via a swab test called the “Novel Coronavirus-2019 (n.Cov-2019).”

2.2 I have a fever/cold. Could I have COVID-19?

If you have a fever or cold AND have either travelled from a country where has been an outbreak of COVID 19 such as China, Italy, Iran or Afghanistan in the last 14 days, or have been in contact with a known patient of COVID-19, you should visit a doctor.

2.3 Where can I go to get tested for COVID-19?

COVID-19 test is a special type of test for which a specimen is needed. This can only be collected by a trained doctor. Once collected, the specimen is sent to the lab for testing.

Specimen of COVID-19 tests are accepted at all Lab Collection Points of the Aga Khan University Hospital. There is a limited number of test kits available, so tests are being restricted to only patients meeting set clinical criteria. According to a list shared by the Government, the below hospitals have COVID-19 testing kits:

- Karachi: The Aga Khan University Hospital and Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Center.
- Islamabad: National Institute of Health and Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences.
- Lahore: Services Hospital.
- Peshawar: Police and Services Hospital.
- Quetta: Fatima Jinnah Chest and General Hospital, and Sheikh Khalifah Bin Zayyad Hospital.

2.4 How much does the COVID-19 test cost?

At the Aga Khan University Hospital, the price of the COVID-19 test is Rs. 7,900.

2.5 How long does it take to get the COVID-19 test result?

Test results are reported within a day.

2.6 Where are COVID-19 patients admitted?

COVID-19 patients are admitted in isolation rooms at dedicated hospitals. In Karachi, these hospitals include: The Aga Khan University Hospital, Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Center, Dr. Ruth K. M. Pfau Civil Hospital and Ojha Institute of Chest Diseases, Dow University of Health Sciences.

3 Protection from COVID-19

3.1 What precautionary measures should I take regularly?

To keep yourself safe, follow these precautions:

- Regularly wash your hands, especially after sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Follow cough/sneeze hygiene practices (cough or sneeze in a tissue or your elbow/ sleeves) and discard used tissues appropriately in the dustbin; do not reuse.
- Drink plenty of water, maintain a healthy diet and do not smoke.

3.2 Can I get COVID-19 from eating fish, chicken or meat?

No. You cannot get COVID-19 by eating fish, chicken or meat. However, cook these thoroughly so that you are not at risk of other infections.

3.3 Can I get COVID-19 from my pets?

No, you cannot get COVID-19 from your pets. However, it is always a good idea to wash your hands with soap and water after petting animals.

3.4 Can I get vaccinated for COVID-19?

There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19.

3.5 Should I wear a mask?

If you are healthy, the routine use of masks is not regarded to be helpful and is not recommended. You could wear a simple surgical mask if you are sick with cold/ flu-like symptoms, or if you are a healthcare worker. The N-95 mask is only needed if you are a healthcare staff working specifically in Intensive or Special Care Units or carrying out special procedures.

3.6 I need to travel soon. What precautions should I take?

If you have to travel, take the following precautions: avoid people who may be sick; wash your hands frequently and try not to touch your face, especially your eyes, nose or mouth without first washing your hands. Wear a surgical mask if you can.

4 Routine AKUH Operations

4.1 Is it safe to visit the Aga Khan University Hospital?

Yes, it is safe to visit the The Aga Khan University Hospital. Probable and confirmed COVID-19 case(s) are in isolation and do not pose harm to other people.

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4.2 Are clinics or surgeries being cancelled at the Aga Khan University Hospital?

No. All clinics, surgeries and other services continue as per schedule.

5 For More Information

5.1 Where can I get more information?

For more information and to download COVID-19 materials, visit the AKUH website:

<https://hospitals.aku.edu/pakistan/pages/default.aspx>.

Government Helpline: 1166.

The Aga Khan University Hospital Contact Centre: +92-21-111-911-911.