

COVID-19 Case definitions for surveillance¹

18 March 2020

Confirmed cases

A confirmed case is a person with laboratory confirmation of infection with the COVID-19 virus, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

Suspected cases

A) a patient with acute respiratory illness (that is, fever and at least one sign or symptom of respiratory disease, for example, cough or shortness of breath) AND with no other etiology that fully explains the clinical presentation AND a history of travel to or residence in a country, area or territory that has reported local transmission of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to symptom onset

OR

B) a patient with any acute respiratory illness AND who has been a contact of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to the onset of symptoms

OR

C) a patient with severe acute respiratory infection (that is, fever and at least one sign or symptom of respiratory disease, for example, cough or shortness of breath) AND who requires hospitalization AND who has no other etiology that fully explains the clinical presentation.

Probable case

A probable case is a suspected case for whom the report from laboratory testing for the COVID-19 virus is inconclusive.

New ICD-10 codes for COVID-19

U07.1 COVID-19, virus identified

U07.2 COVID-19, virus not identified

Clinical COVID-19

Probable COVID-19

Suspected COVID-19

¹ [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/global-surveillance-for-human-infection-with-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/global-surveillance-for-human-infection-with-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))

Classification of COVID-19 using ICD-10

Confirmed cases	No symptoms	With symptoms	ICD-10 codes
	Positive test result only, patient showing no symptoms		U07.1
	Positive test result	COVID-19 documented as cause of death	U07.1*
	Positive test result	Use additional code(s) for respiratory disease (e.g. viral pneumonia J12.8) or signs or symptoms of respiratory disease (e.g. shortness of breath R06.0, cough R05) as documented	U07.1 + codes for symptoms **

***Mortality coding should follow the rules for coding influenza.**

**Use intervention/procedure codes to capture any mechanical ventilation or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation and identify any admission to intensive care unit

**Use additional codes for isolation (Z29.0) or laboratory examination (Z01.7) as required for the specific case

Suspected/probable cases	Patient presents with acute respiratory illness	Contact or suspected exposure	ICD-10 codes
	No other etiology; history of travel	√	U07.2; Z20.8 + codes for symptoms*
	Contact with confirmed or probable case	√	U07.2; Z20.8 + codes for symptoms*
	No other etiology: hospitalization required		U07.2 + codes for symptoms*

*Use intervention/procedure codes to capture any mechanical ventilation or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation and identify any admission to intensive care unit

*Use additional codes for isolation (Z29.0) or laboratory examination (Z01.7) as required for the specific case

COVID-19 ruled out	Presenting clinical scenario	ICD-10 codes
	Patient presents with acute respiratory illness; testing is negative, and COVID-19 is ruled out	Code the relevant stated infection/diagnosis + Z03.8 <i>Observation for other suspected diseases and conditions</i>
	Self-referral: after assessment no reason to suspect disease and further investigations deemed unnecessary	Code Z71.1 <i>Person with feared complaint in whom no diagnosis is made</i>

Testing for COVID-19	Based on clinical judgement, clinicians may order a test for the SARS-CoV-2 virus in a patient who does not strictly meet the case definition.	Code Z11.5 <i>Special screening examination for other viral diseases</i>
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