

## Current major event

### COVID-19 series: Quarantine

As COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve, measures to prevent introduction of the disease to new areas or to reduce human-to-human transmission in areas where COVID-19 virus is already circulating should be considered. Public health measures to achieve these goals may include quarantine.

### Editorial note

On 14 March 2020, 14,2539 confirmed cases were reported globally with 5,393 deaths (CFR 3.78%). In EMR, 17 countries have reported 13,945 confirmed cases with 627 deaths (CFR 4.49%).

To reduce human to human transmission, WHO recommends implementation of quarantine as a part of a comprehensive package of public health response and containment measure with full respect of the dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons. Quarantine of persons is the restriction of activities or separation of persons who are not ill, but who may have been exposed to an infectious agent or disease, with the objective of monitoring symptoms and early detection of cases. Quarantine is different from isolation, which is the separation of ill or infected persons from others, so as to prevent the spread of infection or contamination.

Introducing quarantine measures early in an outbreak may delay the introduction of the disease to a country or area and/or may delay the peak of an epidemic in an area where local transmission is ongoing. However, if not implemented properly, quarantine may also create additional sources of contamination and dissemination of the disease. Quarantine is included within the legal framework of the International Health Regulations (2005).

In the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak, the global containment strategy includes the rapid identification of laboratory-confirmed cases, and their isolation and management in either a medical facility or at home. For contacts of laboratory-confirmed cases, WHO recommends that such persons be quarantined for 14 days from the last time they were exposed to a COVID-19 patient.

For the purpose of implementing quarantine, a contact is defined as a person:

- Providing direct care without proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 patients;

## Recommendations for implementation of quarantine measures

Appropriate quarantine setting and adequate provisions for quarantine period	Minimum infection prevention and control measures	Minimum requirements for health monitoring of quarantined persons during the quarantine period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequately ventilated single room with ensuite toilet</li> <li>• suitable environmental infection controls</li> <li>• maintenance of social distancing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard precautions for all persons quarantined and quarantine personnel</li> <li>• hand hygiene frequently</li> <li>• respiratory hygiene</li> <li>• Environmental cleaning and disinfection</li> <li>• medical mask is not required for persons with no symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily follow-up of persons quarantined should be conducted within the quarantine facility for the duration of the quarantine daily body temperature and symptom screening.</li> <li>• Laboratory testing of a respiratory sample from quarantined persons, irrespective of symptoms, is advised at the end of the quarantine period.</li> </ul>
<p>Any person in quarantine who develops febrile illness or respiratory symptoms, at any point during the quarantine period, should be treated and managed as a suspect COVID-19 case</p>		

### Useful references:

- [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/home-care-for-patients-with-suspected-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-presenting-with-mild-symptoms-and-management-of-contacts](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/home-care-for-patients-with-suspected-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-presenting-with-mild-symptoms-and-management-of-contacts)
- [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/clinical-management-of-severe-acute-respiratory-infection-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/clinical-management-of-severe-acute-respiratory-infection-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected)
- [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected-20200125](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected-20200125)
- [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected-20200125](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected-20200125)
- [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331215/WHO-2019-nCov-IPCPE\\_use-2020\\_1-eng.pdf](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331215/WHO-2019-nCov-IPCPE_use-2020_1-eng.pdf)
- [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)-outbreak](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov)-outbreak)

- Staying in the same close environment of a COVID-19 patient (including workplace, classroom, household, gatherings);
- Traveling together in close proximity (within 1 meter) with a COVID-19 patient in any kind of conveyance within a 14-day period after the onset of symptoms in the case under consideration

Almost all the EMR countries are implementing quarantine in different facilities such as designated hospitals, hotels or residential buildings equipped with the infection prevention and control measures and requirements for health monitoring of quarantined persons during the quarantine period as recommended by WHO. Home quarantine is also recommended under certain requirements.

Regardless of setting, WHO recommended for daily follow up of the quarantined through body temperature and symptoms screening. Laboratory testing of a respiratory sample from quarantined persons, irrespective of symptoms, is advised at the end of the quarantine period.

## Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

**CoVID-19 in 16 EMR countries; cholera in Somalia; cholera in Yemen;**

## Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

### Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2020

Afghanistan	[10 (0)]
Bahrain	[211 (0)]
Egypt	[93 (2), 2.15%]
Iran	[12729 (611), 4.8%]
Iraq	[85 (9), 10.59%]
Jordan	[1 (0)]
Kuwait	[104 (0)]
Lebanon	[93 (3), 3.23]
Morocco	[17 (1), 5.88]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[38 (0)]
Oman	[20 (0)]
Pakistan	[28 (0)]
Qatar	[337 (0)]
Saudi Arabia	[86 (0)]
Tunisia	[16 (0)]
United Arab Emirates	[85 (0)]
Sudan	[1 (1), 100%]

### Cholera: 2017-2020

Somalia	[11 642 (60), 0.52%]
Yemen	[2316766 (3787), 0.16%]