Aerosol-Generating Medical Procedures (AGMPs) and Duration of Validity for a Negative COVID-19 Test Result

“Same Day, Next Day” AGMP Rule

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For any GREEN ZONE (COVID-19 Non-Suspect) patient with length of stay (LOS) < 14 days undergoing an aerosol-generating medical procedure (AGMP), the results of a negative COVID-19 test will be considered valid for the same day the nasopharyngeal (NP) swab/test are performed and the next calendar day (expiring at midnight the day after the swab/test was performed) provided the patient has not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 at the time the AGMP is to be performed. This is referred to as the “Same Day, Next Day” AGMP rule.

This means staff providing care to a GREEN zone patient (LOS<14 days) who has a negative test result and is undergoing an AGMP on the day of the test or the next calendar day after the test (i) do not need to wear an N95 respirator and (ii) do not need to place the patient in a single room.

Background and Rationale

Based on a review of Manitoba data, practices in place in other Canadian jurisdictions, and published reports, and input from Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) and Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health (OESH), Manitoba’s COVID-19 Health System Incident Command is recommending that all AGMPs, including but not limited to, operative patients, utilize the “Same Day, Next Day” rule for AGMPs when a negative COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test has been received.

This “Same Day, Next Day” AGMP rule applies to any GREEN zone patient with a length of stay < 14 days who is undergoing an AGMP.

In these situations, staff providing care to a GREEN zone patient in hospital <14 days, with an AGMP planned for the day of or the day following a negative COVID-19 test result, do not require an N95 respirator and do not need to place the patient in a single room.

If the patient has developed symptoms consistent with COVID-19 between the negative COVID-19 test and the timing of the AGMP, their status should be changed from GREEN to ORANGE and their care plan should be reassessed and follow all guidelines applicable to ORANGE zone patients.

For AGMPs performed on GREEN zone patients (LOS<14 days), where a negative COVID-19 test result has not been received and the conditions of the “Same Day, Next Day” rule for AGMPs are not applicable, staff are required to take precautions including use of an N95 respirator and use of a private room wherever possible. Refer to: https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/aerosol-generating-medical-procedures-AGMPs.pdf.

For AGMPs performed on GREEN zone patients in hospital >14 days and who have no symptoms or exposure history that indicate risk of COVID-19, additional precautions for COVID-19 (an N95 respirator and private room, etc.) are not required.
Surgical Patients

Testing for COVID-19 in the pre-operative patient population has resulted in a significant improvement in resource utilization and improved safety for patients and staff.

Variations in case scheduling and the timing of patient pre-operative testing for COVID-19 resulted in some patients exceeding a 24 hour time frame between their NP swab and their surgery. A review of published reports and practices in other Canadian jurisdictions shows a range of 48-72 hours used by other hospitals as the duration of validity for pre-operative testing.

In order to ensure patients receive care during the timeframe when a negative test result is valid, Manitoba is adopting the “Same Day, Next Day” AGMP rule for all operative procedures involving GREEN ZONE patients. For clarity, the test will be considered valid for the day of the NP swab and the next calendar day (expiring at midnight the day after the swab/test was performed).

If the patient has developed symptoms consistent with COVID-19 between the negative COVID-19 test and the timing of the AGMP, their status should be changed from GREEN to ORANGE and their care plan should be reassessed and follow all guidelines applicable to ORANGE zone patients. Consideration should be given to repeating the test while postponing the surgery, if the treating team deems this to be an appropriate course of action.

Clarity Regarding Application of the “Same Day, Next Day” AGMP Rule

In order to reduce the risk of error in the application of the “Same Day, Next Day” AGMP rule, the rule will apply regardless of the time of day when the NP swab is performed. This will result in some reduction of the “safe window” for patients whose tests are performed later in the day. For example, a patient tested at 11pm will have a shorter window than a patient tested at 6am (the validity of both tests will expire at midnight the following day).

It is the position of Manitoba’s COVID-19 Health System Incident Command that avoiding an error in application is more important than applying a blanket 48 hour window which begins at the time of the test.

NOTE: Where an AGMP is performed after midnight of the next calendar day, e.g. outside the window of the “Same Day, Next Day” rule but within 48 hours of the NP swab being performed, and without the use of an N95 respirator and other precautions, the procedure will not be considered a breach by IP&C.