

CPAC Influenza Screening Guideline for Nursing Staff

For use in Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living Facilities
To be used during influenza season (October 1st to April 30th)

During the influenza season, nursing staff should provide continuous monitoring of patients/residents for signs and symptoms of influenza-like illness. Signs of influenza illness in elderly persons may be atypical, and fever may be absent. Notify the provider immediately if you suspect a patient/resident has influenza illness.

Signs and Symptoms of Influenza Illness	
Major Symptoms:	Acute onset of nonproductive cough Sudden onset of fever >100°F
Minor Symptoms:	Nasal congestion or rhinorrhea, Sore throat, Chills, Headache, Muscle or body aches (Myalgia), New Fatigue, Acute changes in bowel habits
Atypical Signs and Symptoms:	Anorexia, Mental Status Change, Fever may be absent

If one laboratory-confirmed influenza positive case is identified along with other cases of acute respiratory illness in a unit of a long-term care facility, an influenza outbreak might be occurring. Active surveillance for additional cases should be implemented as soon as possible once one case of laboratory-confirmed influenza is identified in a facility. **When 2 cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza are identified within 72 hours of each other in residents on the same unit, outbreak control measures should be implemented as soon as possible. Contact the medical director.** Implementation of outbreak control measures can also be considered as soon as possible when one or more residents have acute respiratory illness with suspected influenza and the results of influenza molecular tests are not available the same day of specimen collection.¹

- All eligible patients/residents in the facility should receive chemoprophylaxis as soon as outbreak is determined, based on geographical layout and resident population at the discretion of the medical director.
- Conclude strategies to address an influenza outbreak 7 days after the last resident/patient exhibits symptoms. Measures may continue for a longer period at the discretion of the medical director.

¹ CDC, 2019 Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/ltc-facility-guidance.htm>

Document reviewed and updated: September, 2019

Clinical Practice Alliance Committee of MAGIC
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