

# COVID-19 Q-and-A

Updated February, 2022

The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) is answering your questions regarding COVID-19, PPE and more. More specific information can be found on our website at [www.ona.org/coronavirus](http://www.ona.org/coronavirus)

The answers to some of the questions, provided below, may change and we will provide updates as the guidance, directives, and orders from government change and as the science develops throughout the course of the pandemic.

## **My close contact has a confirmed case of COVID-19. What should I do?**

- If you have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19, you should self-isolate and monitor your symptoms, if they develop.
- You should notify your employer to advise them of the exposure. They should let you know of your next steps.

## **I have COVID-19 symptoms. What should I do?**

- If you are experiencing symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, shortness of breath, etc.) stay home and self-isolate.
- You should notify your employer as well. They should provide you with guidance and next steps, including potential testing options.

## **I have COVID-19. What should I do?**

- If you have COVID-19, you must isolate and monitor your symptoms.
- Notify your employer so they can advise you of the next steps, including information about returning to work.
- If your symptoms become worse and you need medical treatment, call your practitioner.

## **I believe that I contracted COVID-19 at work. What should I do?**

- You need to submit a [Form 6](#) with to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). You must file a claim within six months of the date of your exposure/illness. The WSIB will make a decision on your claim. If the WSIB denies your claim, contact ONA's WSIB Intake at 1-800-387-5580 (press 0 and ask for WSIB intake or dial extension 7721) or [WSIBintake@ona.org](mailto:WSIBintake@ona.org).
- Notify your employer of your illness, so they can advise you of next steps.

**I have a psychological injury due to work-related COVID-19 trauma or stress. What should I do?**

- File a [Form 6](#) with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).
- Notify your employer.
- Seek medical attention.

**What types of precautions should I use when treating a patient with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?**

Nurses and health-care professionals should complete a Point-of-Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) before providing care.

If you determine that you require a fit-tested N95 respirator or equivalent, your employer must provide one to you. If you are denied one, please contact your [Bargaining Unit President](#) for advice and support. You should also wear a gown, gloves and eye protection.

Note that as an interim precaution, required precautions for all health-care workers providing direct care to or interacting with a suspected, probable (i.e. placed in precautions as high risk contact, in an outbreak zone of the facility or recently transferred from a facility in outbreak) or confirmed cases of COVID-19 are a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator (or approved equivalent), eye protection (goggles or face shield), gown and gloves.

**What health and safety rights do I have in my workplace?**

ONA strongly supports the use of the precautionary principle to minimize the risks of COVID-19. It is your right to work in a safe workplace. In particular, you have:

- The right to know about the hazards and controls in the workplace
- The right to participate in health and safety initiatives.
- The right to refuse unsafe work if an undue hazard is present. If you do refuse unsafe work, please reach out and receive support from your ONA representative (such as your Bargaining Unit President, health and safety rep, etc.).

***If at any point you have questions, please reach out to your [Bargaining Unit President](#). They are here to help and assist you.***