

Los Angeles County Department of Health Services 2020-2021  
Influenza/COVID Diagnosis and Treatment Guideline

**Patient with Influenza or COVID-Like Illness (I/CLI)<sup>1</sup>**

**Patient to be admitted or likely to be admitted?**

Yes

No

Test for Flu/RSV/COVID using “**Respiratory Virus / COVID Test Request**” test and select indication as appropriate:

- Admit Symptomatic
- Admit Peds Resp (12 y/o)
- Psych Symptomatic

**Neg  
Flu  
Test**

Do not treat  
for influenza

**Pos  
Flu  
Test**

Treat for influenza  
if  $\leq 5$ d after  
symptom onset<sup>3</sup>

**Patient with risk factors for complications  
of influenza or severe clinical influenza disease or lives with others at  
high-risk for influenza complications<sup>2</sup>**

If this is a phone visit, consider additional clinical evaluation if indicated

**High<sup>2</sup>  
Risk**

1) Treat for influenza if  $\leq 5$ d from symptom onset<sup>3</sup>  
2) **Influenza** testing is not required

**Low  
Risk**

1) Do not treat for influenza  
2) Do not send **influenza** test

1) Test for **COVID only** with available order set for your location:

- “**AMB Coronavirus COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)**” test

or

- **Respiratory Virus / COVID Test Request** and select indication:
  - “Outpatient – Can isolate”

<sup>1</sup>COVID and influenza may present similarly.

Symptom	COVID-19	Influenza
Fever	Most frequent symptoms	Most frequent symptoms
Cough	Most frequent symptoms	Most frequent symptoms
Fatigue	Most frequent symptoms	Most frequent symptoms
Shortness of breath	Most frequent symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Chills	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Headache	Secondary symptoms	Most frequent symptoms
Repeated shaking with chills	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Runny or stuffy nose	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Nausea or diarrhea	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Sore throat	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms
Loss of taste or smell	Secondary symptoms	Secondary symptoms


 Most frequent symptoms  
 Secondary symptoms

Adapted from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/global-covid-19/ILI-SARI-AFI-for-COVID-19.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Risk factors for complications of influenza include: 1) age <2 or >65 years; 2) pregnancy; 3) BMI ≥40 or >99 percentile for kids, 4) chronic pulmonary (including asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus immunosuppression; 6) persons <19 years receiving long-term aspirin; 7) American Indians/Alaska Natives.

<sup>3</sup> Antivirals for influenza are most effective when administered <48 hours after symptom onset. May have benefit even up to 4-5 days after symptoms start.

***The above is a recommended guideline; individual patients may require clinical management not outlined here.***

This guideline was developed by Adult and Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Infection Prevention and Control, Antibiotic Stewardship, and the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory and is consistent with the latest CDC guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/algorithm-results-circulating.htm>