

Keeping Physicians in Mind and Informed.



CORONAVIRUS

UPDATE

CDC

COVID-19 Update, 4\17

April 17, 2020 | [ARKMED.org/covid19](https://www.arkmed.org/covid19)

Status Update as of 4\17, from ADH Website:

[View the ADH COVID-19 Dashboard here.](#)

It will be updated four times a day.

- Confirmed cumulative cases in Arkansas - 1695
- Active cases - 1065
- Recovered patients - 593
- Deaths - 37
- Patients in the hospital - 93
- Patients on ventilators - 23
- Healthcare workers - 228 (19 are physicians)

Updated Guidance from ADH on COVID-19 Testing

Testing capacity and technology for COVID-19 are rapidly changing. PCR tests can now be done using traditional technology or rapid result point of care instruments. These are tests for components of the virus. Serological tests are also available but not appropriate for diagnosis.

Over the past week, capacity for COVID-19 testing at commercial labs has increased significantly, resulting in shortened turnaround times. Therefore, **the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) now recommends that clinicians consider testing patients for COVID-19 based solely on their symptoms.** This means patients can be tested even if they do not have known risk factors of contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19 or travel to an area with widespread community transmission of COVID-19.

Providers should use their best clinical judgment to determine if a patient's presentation is consistent with COVID-19 and needs testing. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat). However, some patients have had atypical presentations with diarrhea and without fever. Other groups worthy of screening include those admitted to hospital ICUs, those with sudden onset severe illnesses, and pregnant women. This relaxation of testing criteria will allow for more accurate estimates of COVID-19 prevalence in Arkansas.

Testing capacity at ADH's Public Health Laboratory has also increased. Due to our public health mandate, we continue to prioritize the testing of patients who:

1. require a rapid diagnosis because they are hospitalized with significant symptoms or
2. in the intensive care unit, or those who reside in an institutional facility (i.e., longterm care, correctional facility, etc.), or are part of the cohort of known contacts of positive cases that we are actively following.

If you have a patient who you think meets criteria for testing at ADH, please call the Physician Hotline at 1-844-930-3023 to discuss the case with an ADH clinician. Otherwise, continue to send specimens to your preferred commercial lab.

CDC recommends providers have a supply of face masks and tissues for patients with symptoms of respiratory infection. These should be provided to patients with symptoms of respiratory infection at check-in. Source control (putting a face mask over the mouth and nose of a symptomatic patient) can help to prevent transmission to others.

ADH Directive Regarding the Use of Nucleic Acid Amplification Test

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) recognizes the importance of having diagnostic NAATs for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 at POC settings such as those listed above during the current public health emergency. In the interest of patient safety, the ADH requires that all POC NAAT devices and assays used outside of CLIA approved laboratories have written approval from the Arkansas Secretary of Health.

[Click here to read the entire directive.](#)

AMS Advocates for More Financial Support for Physicians

Today, AMS sent the following letters to Senators Boozman and Cotton asking for financial support for physicians. As doctors and front-line staff continue to sacrifice everything and put their lives on the line each day during this immediate threat, we must recognize their heroic efforts and stand behind them. The CARES Act was a good start, and is certainly appreciated, but the job is not over.

[Click here to read the letters.](#)

PPE Requests

If your clinic does not have PPE and is unable to obtain what you need from your normal supplier, [complete the online form](#).

Financial Assistance

We've compiled all of the financial resources that you may need for your clinic or practice during the COVID-19 crisis at <https://www.arkmed.org/financial-assistance-during-covid-19/>.

Telemedicine

View the latest information from insurance carriers, HIPAA, and other sources on telemedicine during the COVID-19 crisis at [ARKMED.org/telemedicine](https://www.arkmed.org/telemedicine).

[Join our COVID-19 Mailing List](#)

Got Questions? Let Us Help.

The Arkansas Medical Society is here to serve our physician members and their medical teams. On our website, we have a place that you can send us questions or share what you're experiencing. Visit [ARKMED.org/covid19](https://www.arkmed.org/covid19) and click on the Got Questions box. We will respond to your question as soon as possible. Thank you for your hard work and together we will make it through this crisis.

For more AMS COVID-19 Resources, visit [ARKMED.org/covid19](https://www.arkmed.org/covid19).