

Case definition coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)¹

Clinical criteria

Any person with at least one of the following symptoms²:

- cough
- fever
- shortness of breath
- sudden onset of anosmia, ageusia or dysgeusia

Diagnostic imaging criteria

Radiological evidence showing lesions compatible with COVID-19

Laboratory criteria

At least one of the following:

- Detection of SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid in a clinical specimen³
- Detection of SARS-CoV-2 antigen in a clinical specimen⁴

Epidemiological criteria

At least one of the following two epidemiological links:

- close contact⁵ with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms
- having been a resident or a staff member, in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms, in a residential institution for vulnerable people where ongoing COVID-19 transmission has been confirmed

Case classification

- A. Possible case
Any person meeting the clinical criteria
- B. Probable case
Any person meeting the clinical criteria with an epidemiological link
OR
Any person meeting the diagnostic criteria
- C. Confirmed case
Any person meeting the laboratory criteria

¹ Note that the term “suspect cases” which addressed individuals who should be tested for COVID-19 is no longer used. Read more on [testing strategies](#)

² Additional less specific symptoms may include headache, chills, muscle pain, fatigue, vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

³ For further guidance on laboratory issues, see <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus/laboratory-support>

⁴ Refer to the ECDC rapid antigen test technical document for guidance on which settings rapid antigen tests should be used and for further details

⁵ Close contact defined according to the ECDC guidance document ‘[Contact tracing: Public health management of persons, including healthcare workers, having had contact with COVID-19 cases in the European Union](#)’