

Patient Refusal of COVID-19 Testing

In order to maintain a safe clinical environment for patients and healthcare workers, NM has established [Testing Guidelines](#) to outline requirements for testing SARS-CoV-2.

In the event that a patient refuses testing, the clinical care team should first understand the reason for refusal and attempt to problem-solve the situation.

Common examples for refusing a COVID-19 test include the following reasons, but are not limited to:

Common Examples of Reason for Refusal	Response
Cost of the test	The patient will not be billed for any fees related to the COVID-19 Test
Fear of pain/discomfort associated with sample collection	If a patient refuses a nasopharyngeal swab because of the discomfort of the test, consider ID consultation to discuss possible alternative test specimens.
Fear related to the stigma of a positive test result	Physician to educate the patient on what a positive result means, and risks of not being tested

If the patient continues to refuse testing after counseling, the attending physician can follow the guidelines outlined for elective procedures or non-elective care.

- Elective procedures:
 - The physician completes a clinical assessment and has the option to refuse or defer treatment, or continue treatment without a SARS-CoV-2 test.
 - If the physician determines to continue treatment without testing, the patient should be treated as presumed positive, and the following actions need to occur:
 - Communicate any potential risks associated with being treated as a presumed positive patient
 - The “Refused COVID-19 Test” order must be entered in Epic to document that the patient refused testing, and to activate the Presumed Positive Infection Flag on the patient chart.
- Non-elective care:
 - The physician completes a clinical assessment, and the patient should be treated as presumed positive. The following actions need to occur to treat the patient as presumed positive:
 - Communicate any potential risks associated with being treated as a presumed positive patient
 - The “Refused COVID-19 Test” order must be entered in Epic to document that the patient refused testing, and to activate the Presumed Positive Infection Flag on the patient chart.
 - An ID Consult can be requested if the treating physician has questions regarding diagnosis, testing and/or treatment options.

Refer to the [COVID-19 Infection Status Flags](#) document on NMI for more information regarding COVID-19 infection flags. Upon completion of the encounter, clearing the presumed positive flag can be managed per the discretion of a physician treating the patient.

Patient Refusal of COVID-19 Testing

Below is a screen shot of the “Refused COVID-19” order in Epic.

Refused COVID-19 Test

Priority: Routine

Frequency: ONE TIME 1 Time Until D/C Q Shift Daily (specify time) PRN

Starting: 6/3/2020 Today Tomorrow At: 0941

First Occurrence: Today 0941

Scheduled Times A:
06/03/20 0941

Comments: + Add Comments (F6)

CC Results:

Recipient	Modifier

Add PCP Add My List Build My Lists Clear All

Next Required Link Order Accept Cancel

Patient Refused COVID-19 Testing Algorithm:

