As of June 9 2020, CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has received 5,545 samples from 16 CMS, 455 (8.2%) of which have tested positive since the start of the outbreak.

**TRENDING AT CARPHA**

CARPHA’s Environmental Health and Sustainable Development Division (EHSD-CARPHA): Solid Waste Management and COVID-19

EHSD-CARPHA has provided guidelines and other information regarding solid waste management practices related to COVID-19.

**Quarantine Facilities**
- Provide special collection services for infectious/potentially infectious waste
- Provide alternative guidelines for SWM in remote facilities with infrequent collection services
- Use front loading trucks for waste collection from facilities
- Follow the same waste management procedures as healthcare facilities

**General Infectious Waste Management**
- Waste associated with COVID-19 is managed the same as other infectious or biohazardous waste
- Separate waste at source
- Treat coronavirus waste as infectious waste
- Deposit in an infectious or biohazardous waste bin
- Collect waste at least daily, transport in leak-proof, puncture proof containers, with the biohazard symbol
- Store on premises in areas that are clean, secure, away from public access and protected from the elements, pests, and disease vectors
- Use best management practices for final disposal for example autoclaving then burial or incineration
CLINICAL PRESENTATION

*Based on patients in the United States of America

**Most Common:**
- Fever *(temperature > 37.5 °C)*
- Shortness of breath
- Cough *(both dry and productive)*
- Muscle pain

**Atypical:**
- Older adults and persons with medical conditions may have delayed presentation of fever and respiratory symptoms.
- Diarrhoea and nausea may be experienced before developing fever and other symptoms.
- Loss of smell and an altered sense of taste have been reported.

**Illness Severity**

**MILD to MODERATE:**
Patients present with mild symptoms up to mild pneumonia.

**SEVERE:**
Patients have severe difficulty breathing, low oxygen levels and >50% lung involvement on imaging.

**CRITICAL:**
Patients can have respiratory failure, shock and multi-organ system dysfunction.

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**PREVENTION OF DISEASE**

Social Distancing can **stop or slow down** the spread of a disease in the community. It requires limiting the time we spend with persons outside of our close family and/or housemates. It means putting **more space** between persons to decrease the chance of spread and thus, infection.

![Social Distancing Image]

- **Wash your hands often** and carefully with soap and water or clean with an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Cough or sneeze** into your elbow or sleeve if tissue is not available.
- **Practice social distancing. Avoid contact with anyone who is coughing or sneezing.**
- **Use face masks** when applicable, e.g. when visiting the grocery or market.
- **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care.**
- **If you develop symptoms, stay home. Avoid public transport and public spaces. Seek medical care.**

**Other Precautionary Measures**

- **Wash your hands often** and carefully with soap and water or clean with an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Cough or sneeze** into your elbow or sleeve if tissue is not available.
- **Practice social distancing. Avoid contact with anyone who is coughing or sneezing.**
- **Use face masks** when applicable, e.g. when visiting the grocery or market.
- **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care.**
- **If you develop symptoms, stay home. Avoid public transport and public spaces. Seek medical care.**

**EXPLAINING COVID-19 TO CHILDREN**

COVID-19 has affected everyone, including children. Adequate time should be spent discussing this disease with the children in your household. Some tips when explaining COVID-19 with children include:

1. **Remain calm and reassure them that they are safe.**
2. **Make time to talk and listen to their concerns. Try to answer truthfully and age appropriately.**
3. **Teach them actions to include in their daily routine to stay safe.**

Storytelling is also an option when explaining COVID-19 to children. The excerpt below is from Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings entitled "My Hero is You: How Kids Can Fight COVID-19!"

"What does COVID-19 look like?” Sara asked her mum. "COVID-19, or the coronavirus, is so tiny we can’t see it,” said her mum. "But it spreads in the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick, and when they touch people or things around them. People who are sick get a fever and a cough and can have some trouble breathing.”

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**RECENT CARPHA PRODUCTS**
Caribbean Countries Reopening Plans/Initiatives post COVID-19
Public Education Resources
Media
Videos

**REFERENCES**

(2) Johns Hopkins University’s Centre for Science and Engineering Accessed at 8:33am June 10, 2020.