



National Health Mission
SDA Complex, Kasumpti, Shimla-9
Himachal Pradesh
Dated: Shimla-171009, the



CIRCULAR

The Government of India has issued revised Discharge Policy for COVID-19. The Department of Health and Family Welfare, Himachal Pradesh adopted the discharge policy with some modifications vide Circular Bearing no. No.NHMHP-IDSP/1/2020-IDSP-Section-NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION-HP-Part (1) 3281 dated 18th May 2020. The ICMR has reiterated vide its advisory dated 4th September 2020 that no re-testing is recommended prior to discharge from a COVID-19 facility after clinical recovery as per MoHFW guidelines. Therefore, keeping in view the evolving scientific evidence and directions of Government of India, the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Himachal Pradesh hereby adopts the discharge policy prescribed by Government of India (copy enclosed) for necessary compliance by all concerned.

The recovery/discharge of COVID-19 patients on Home Isolation shall continue to be governed by Circular No. NHMHP-IDSP/1/2020-IDSP-Section-NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION-HP-Part(2) - 5210 dated 23rd July 2020.


Additional Chief Secretary (Health) to the
Government of Himachal Pradesh

Endst no. As Above, Dated: Shimla-9, the

Copy for information and necessary action to:

1. Special Secretary (Health) to the Government of Himachal Pradesh
2. All Deputy Commissioners, Himachal Pradesh
3. Director Health Services, Himachal Pradesh
4. Director Medical Education, Himachal Pradesh
5. All Chief Medical Officers, Himachal Pradesh
6. All Nodal Officers, CCC/DCHC/DCH in Himachal Pradesh
7. District Surveillance Officers, Himachal Pradesh




Additional Chief Secretary (Health) to the
Government of Himachal Pradesh

Revised Discharge Policy for COVID-19

The revised discharge policy is aligned with the guidelines on the 3 tier COVID facilities and the categorization of the patients based on clinical severity (Available at:

<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/FinalGuidanceonMangaementofCovidcasesversion2.pdf>)

1. Mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases

Mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases admitted to a COVID Care Facility will undergo regular temperature and pulse oximetry monitoring. The patient can be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days. There will be no need for testing prior to discharge.

At the time of discharge, the patient will be advised to isolate himself at home and self-monitor their health for further 7 days.

At any point of time, prior to discharge from CCC, if the oxygen saturation dips below 95%, patient is moved to Dedicated COVID Health Centre (DCHC).

After discharge from the facility, if he/she again develops symptoms of fever, cough or breathing difficulty he will contact the COVID Care Centre or State helpline or 1075. His/her health will again be followed up through tele-conference on 14th day.

2. Moderate cases admitted to Dedicated COVID Health Centre (Oxygen beds)

2.1. Patients whose symptoms resolve within 3 days and maintains saturation above 95% for the next 4 days

Cases clinically classified as “moderate cases” will undergo monitoring of body temperature and oxygen saturation. If the fever resolve within 3 days and the patient maintains saturation above 95% for the next 4 days (without oxygen support), such patient will be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset in case of:

- Absence of fever without antipyretics
- Resolution of breathlessness
- No oxygen requirement

There will be no need for testing prior to discharge.

At the time of discharge, the patient will be advised to isolate himself at home and self-monitor their health for further 7 days.

2.2. Patient on Oxygenation whose fever does not resolve within 3 days and demand of oxygen therapy continues

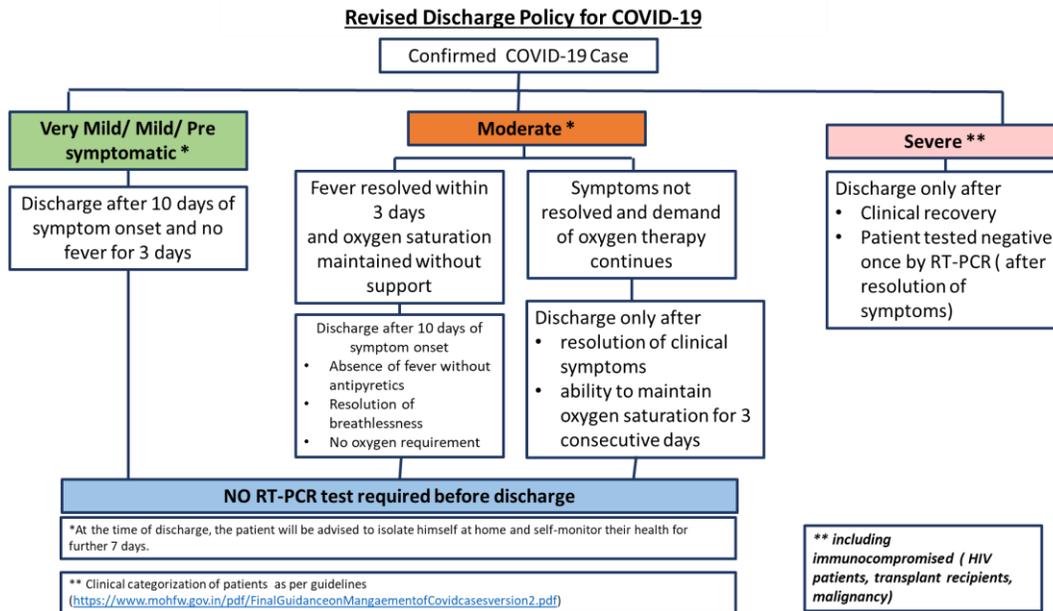
Such patients will be discharged only after

- resolution of clinical symptoms
- ability to maintain oxygen saturation for 3 consecutive days

3. Severe Cases including immunocompromised (HIV patients, transplant recipients, malignancy)

Discharge criteria for severe cases will be based on

- Clinical recovery
- Patient tested negative once by RT-PCR (after resolution of symptoms)



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Revised Discharge Policy, dated 8th May, 2020

A revised discharge policy for COVID-19 cases was issued by MoHFW on 8th May, 2020. (Available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/ReviseddischargePolicyforCOVID19.pdf>). The policy was prepared in consultation with ICMR and is in line with the MoHFW's guidelines on the categorization of the patients based on clinical severity and their management in the 3 tier COVID facilities (Available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/FinalGuidanceonMangaementofCovidcasesversion2.pdf>).

FAQs

1. What was earlier criteria for discharging COVID-19 patients

The earlier criteria for discharging RT-PCR positive were (a) chest radiograph has cleared and (b) two consecutive negative test results on RT-PCR.

2. What is the new discharge policy for COVID-19 patients?

For mild/very mild/pre-symptomatic cases

- Patient can be discharged after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days
- No need for testing prior to discharge
- Patient will be advised to isolate himself/herself at home & self-monitor his/her health for further 7 days

For moderate cases

- Patient can be discharged (a) if asymptomatic for 3 days and (b) after 10 days of symptom onset
- No need for testing prior to discharge
- Patient will be advised to isolate himself/herself at home & self-monitor his/her health for further 7 days

For severe cases

- Clinical recovery
- Patient tested negative once by RT-PCR (after resolution of symptoms)

3. Why was the discharge policy changed?

Several countries have changed the criteria for discharge from 'test based strategy to 'symptom based strategy' or 'time based 'strategy. A review of ICMR laboratory surveillance data also indicated that after initial RT-PCR positive results, patients became negative after a median duration of 10 days. Recent studies have also suggested that the viral load peaks in the pre-symptomatic period (2 days before symptoms) and goes down over the next 7 days.

4. How then it will be established that a patient is cured of the disease?

Being cured of a disease may have different connotations for general public, treating doctors and the virologists. Unless there is a fear of resurgence of infection and subsequent transmissibility of an infection, resolution of clinical manifestation is usually taken as an evidence for cure.

5. Is there a risk of transmission from patients discharged based on the revised criteria?

Available evidence does not indicate any increase in the risk of transmission from patients discharged based on the revised discharge criteria. The revised criterion also specifies that such patient will be advised to isolate himself/herself at home & self-monitor his/her health for further 7 days.

6. What precautions the patient should undertake during home isolation?

Such patients should at all times use triple layer medical mask. Patient must stay in the identified room and away from other people in home, especially elderly and those with co-morbid conditions like hypertension, cardiovascular disease, renal disease etc. They should maintain strict personal hygiene and self-monitor his/her health with daily temperature monitoring and report promptly if develops any deterioration of symptom.

7. Is there a need to get tested after the home isolation period is over?

No. As per the latest revised discharge policy, there is no need for testing prior to discharge all pre-symptomatic/very mild/mild confirmed cases of COVID-19 after 10 days of symptom onset and no fever for 3 days. Therefore, it stands to reason, that no testing is also needed for patients undergoing home isolation (pre-symptomatic/very mild/mild confirmed cases) after the home isolation period is over.

8. What does the current discharge policy mean for patients who are being home isolated?

As detailed above, as far as testing is concerned, there is no need for testing after the home isolation period is over. However, (as the current discharge policy advises that patients isolate themselves at home & self-monitor their health for further 7 days after discharge), the period of home isolation would end after 17 (10+7) days of symptom onset and no fever for 10 (3+7) days.

9. Does this policy apply to those undergoing home or facility quarantine?

Discharge policy is meant for patients (symptomatic/pre-symptomatic) diagnosed (using RT-PCR testing) to be suffering from COVID-19. Quarantine (home or facility) is meant for asymptomatic/healthy persons who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 infection but are not manifesting any symptoms. Therefore, there is no question of discharge of such persons. However, their stay under quarantine period will remain 14 days from the date of last exposure.