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| COVID-19 Guidelines for UG students |
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| University Health Service COVID-19 Response Team  December 2020 |

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# A: Introduction

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, which was discovered in China in December 2019. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.  Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

This document is a guideline developed by the University Health Services COVID-19 Response Team to inform UG students on:

1. Preventive measures to prevent spread of COVID-19
2. How and when to get tested, and get results
3. How positive cases are managed
4. Additional support available for all UG students.

Due to the fact that a lot of information is being generated to understand how best to manage this pandemic globally, these guidelines will be updated according to national and global trends.

# B: COVID-19 Symptoms

Most cases will not have any symptoms, while others may have non-specific symptoms. However, **ALL** cases are capable of spread from one person to another.

## Major symptoms

* Fever (Temperature of 37.8\*C or greater as measured by a clinical thermometer)
* Shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing
* Loss of smell
* Loss of taste
* Sore throat

## Minor symptoms

* Cough
* Chills
* Head or muscle ache
* Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea

The disease spreads from person to person through infected air droplets that are projected during sneezing or coughing.  It can also be transmitted when humans have contact with hands or surfaces that contain the virus and touch their eyes, nose, or mouth with the contaminated hands. Protect yourself and others from infection by wearing your mask correctly and regularly, washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently and not touching your face with unwashed hands. It is important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (covering your cough with tissue or coughing into a flexed elbow).

# C. Testing

## How can I get tested?

* Any student who shows any one of the major symptoms, or two or more of the minor symptoms should stay away from in-person lectures, practicals, other academic activities, and social gatherings
* They should report to the Students’ Clinic the next morning or to the Hospital Pre-triaging point at the gate (only weekends).
* The student will be assessed further and a sample for COVID-19 testing will be taken.
* After sample is taken, the student should self-isolate until test results are communicated to them. This is a very important intervention to avoid preventable contact with positive cases, and to prevent further spread on campus.
* Currently it takes between 3 and 7 days to get the results. All efforts are being made to shorten this.

## How will I know my results?

* If your result is negative, you will receive a message from the Hospital Covid-19 response team via phone.
* If your result is positive you will receive a call from the Hospital Covid-19 response team.
* If you do not have a working phone number, kindly provide a working phone number of a trusted person through whom you can be reached, and your result delivered to you.
* If you have not received your results after 5 (five) days, send a message to 0547475165 or 0593955913. WhatsApp messages can be sent to 0249903125.

**NB**: Do not trust any other source or person to give you your results.

# D: Managing students who test positive for COVID-19

If you receive information from one of our team members that your test is positive, make the person aware that you are a UG student. If you also test outside UHL please send a message to 0547475165/ 0593955913 or 0249903125 (WhatsApp only)

## What happens if the test result is positive?

* The University Health Service (UHS) Team will work with the District Case Management Team for appropriate management of all cases.
* Contact tracing team will be informed to identify all contacts. Please be cooperative and provide all the needed information for an effective process.

### **Asymptomatic or mild disease**

* Strict self-isolation. Students are expected to strictly adhere to all prescribed measures. A breach will be considered as unprofessional behaviour.
* The Case Management Team from the University Health Services will provide the required medication, and also provide some monitoring during the period of isolation.

### **Moderate to severe disease**

* The UHS Team will admit to the holding area of the UHS (or a designated place) and provide care until transfer to a Treatment Centre is effected.

## When can I be out of isolation?

Students can return to normal in-person academic and social activities:

* 14 days after the initial positive test (i.e. the date the sample was taken) if there are no symptoms
* If symptoms are still present, then they continue isolation until symptoms resolve.
* A repeat polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test is not necessary for ending isolation.

# E: Contact tracing

The UHS Team has been working with the National Contact Tracing Team to conduct contact tracing for students who test positive.

* Students who test positive will be contacted by the contact tracing team.
* Students should endeavour to give accurate information
* Students identified as contacts who require testing will be assisted to have the testing done.

# F: Prevention

## General preventive measures

* Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or clean them with alcohol-based hand rub (at least 70% alcohol).
* Always wear your mask correctly when outside your room
* Maintain at least 1 metre distance between you and people coughing or sneezing
* Avoid touching your face without cleaning your hands first.
* Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
* Always wash your hands when you return to your accommodation.
* Familiarise yourself with and follow the University COVID-19 guidelines
* Don't invite friends or family to visit you – stay in contact online instead. **Do not entertain ‘perchers’**
* Don't host visitors, parties or gatherings in your room.
* Stay away from all academic activity if you feel unwell.

## Hygiene and cleaning in rooms

* All bedrooms, common spaces and communal bathrooms will be thoroughly and professionally disinfected before you move in.

There will also be an ongoing cleaning regime throughout the semester where common spaces and communal bathrooms will be cleaned daily to manage the risk of coronavirus

* Once you move into your room, your living space will be your responsibility to clean – along with your roommates.
* You will need to clean your bedroom surfaces on a regular basis, as well as your door handles, fridges and TVs.
* You must ensure that you clean your bedroom and bathrooms regularly, ensuring that any rubbish is disposed of in the external bin areas located at your hall.

## Getting academic work done

* Shared spaces should be redesigned to ensure at least 1 metre spacing.
* Face masks must be worn in all shared academic spaces.
* Communication should be virtual as much as possible.
* Sharing of items such as pens, etc should be discouraged.
* Clean shared items before you use them; e.g. computers, workspaces, tables, etc.

## Boosting immunity

These measures should be taken in consideration bearing in mind allergies and other underlying conditions. Consult your physician when in doubt.

* Arrange to have a good and sound sleep and exercise for at least 30 minutes a day.
* Acquire skills that will help you manage stress.
* Eat a well-balanced diet, with enough fruits and vegetables.
* Beverages should be quite warm when taken.

# G: Stigmatization

* Fear of interacting with people who have recovered from the disease may lead to stigmatization. This may lead to people refusing to disclose their symptoms and/or test for the virus.
* Show support for one another and create a welcoming environment for study.
* Maintain privacy and confidentiality. Remember the virus does not discriminate; neither should we. It could be anyone.
* We can all stop stigmatization by keeping up to date with accurate information. Correct any negative behaviours or language that can cause stigma.
* Anyone who suffers any form of stigmatization should report to the appropriate authorities (Head of Department, Dean of Student Affairs) for the necessary action to be taken.
* Students should contact any member of the counselling team for support.

# H: Mental Health Support

Mental health support will be provided for all students. Any student who feels anxious or feels they need support can call any of the numbers provided below.

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| **NAME** | **PHONE NUMBER** |
| 1.REVEREND FATHER ANTHONY AFRIYIE | 0244402101 |
| 2.MRS GLADYS SETORDZI | 0277497208 |
| 3. MR. KINGSLEY KING-KUADZI | 0249414260 |
| 4. DR MOSES NUWOR | 0244741118 |

# I. Long term effects of COVID-19

For some people, some symptoms may linger on for weeks or months after the initial recovery. This can happen even in people with mild disease, in young people or in people with no underlying illnesses. These people are not capable of spreading the disease to others during this time. Some people may also develop medical complications that may have lasting health effects. Report such symptoms to the Students’ Clinic.

It is not yet known if a person with antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 is immune and therefore protected from being infected again. So, should you contract and recover from COVID-19 disease, please do not compromise on the preventive measures.

# J. References:

* <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1>
* <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>
* [Microsoft PowerPoint - EPI-WIN COVID Update 36\_9 September 2020 - Long-term symptoms.pptx (who.int)](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/risk-comms-updates/update-36-long-term-symptoms.pdf?sfvrsn=5d3789a6_2)
* [Microsoft PowerPoint - EPI-WIN COVID Update 34\_06 August 2020 - Immunity - 2nd update for web.pptx (who.int)](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/risk-comms-updates/update-34-immunity-2nd.pdf?sfvrsn=8a488cb6_2)