

Subject: URGENT: COVID-19 testing, MDI shortage, chest imaging guidelines
Importance: High

Dear Ambulatory Medical Directors:

Please forward to your teams:

1. Critical shortage of testing kits

- a. UCHHealth Communication last night referenced stoppage of “Community Testing” – this verbiage was unclear
- b. Short answer: **do not send ambulatory patients *just* for testing.**
- c. May still refer to ED **ONLY IF** clinically indicated based on *severity*. Do NOT promise they will get testing.
- d. **Health care workers** can still be tested by contacting Employee Health **720.787.3321**
 - i. “Health Care Worker”
 - 1. includes UCHHealth Employees, including those working in CU Medicine practices
 - 2. CU Med Providers, including freestanding clinics
 - 3. UCHMG
- e. Official guidance will be out shortly

2. National Shortage of MDI's: Guidance from Andrew A. Davis, PharmD, MBA-HA Associate Director, Ambulatory Care Pharmacy Services

Efforts underway to conserve them since nebulizers aerosolize coronavirus

- a. All pharmacies are currently experiencing inhaler (MDI) shortages due to increase demand, supplier allocations, and backorders. To enable extended use of this critical resource for inpatient COVID-19 confirmed or suspect cases we are now restricting MDI use to this patient population. MDI's are preferred over nebulizers in this patient population for infection control reasons. All other patients requiring inhaled bronchodilators will need to receive alternative delivery methods, such as nebulizers. The individual hospitals will triage orders to the preferred product based on inventory. In regards to outpatient/retail prescriptions we may need to limit bronchodilator dispenses to a one month supply. The individual retail pharmacies will direct use of alternative products as the need emerges.
- b. For the ambulatory setting - The restriction to 1 MDI is limited to bronchodilators, such as albuterol, Xopenex, etc. For patients who may typically receive a 90-day supply of a bronchodilator for outpatient use, will receive only 1 inhaler for a 30-day supply at a time. This limitation does not apply to other inhaled products, such as ICS.
- c. For inpatient, the inpatient supply of MDI bronchodilators will be reserved for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients vs using a nebulizer in this patient population to minimize risk of spread.

3. Guidelines / procedures for Chest imaging for COVID-19

- a. Process details:
 - 1. Requests for CT's will require approval by a radiologist. If an order is received, the CT tech will contact an attending radiologist who will then reach out to you to discuss the case.
 - 2. Requests for CXR's will not require prior approval at this time. However, we encourage you to consider not ordering them unless there is a specific clinical question that the CXR can answer.
 - 3. Inpatient and ED CXR's on R/O COVID-19 patients will be performed portably so as not to necessitate cleaning of our diagnostic imaging rooms.
- b. See further details below.

Thank you.

Peter Chabot Smith, MD

Associate Professor, Associate Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs, Department of Family Medicine
Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, University of Colorado School of Medicine
Assistant Medical Director, CU Medicine

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

Academic Office Building 1, Room L15-3603

12631 E 17th Ave, Aurora, CO 80045 | Mail Stop F496

E: peter.smith@cuanschutz.edu | O: 303.724.8442 | F: 303.724.9746 | M: 303.506.1002

www.cuanschutz.edu