

## Returning to work after viral respiratory infection

This update is a reminder of the steps medical staff can take to care for themselves and contribute to the safety of their patients and those with whom they work.



We are in the midst of a fall and winter respiratory illness season. Limiting the spread of VRI in the healthcare workplace continues to be a priority especially in times of increased community spread.



If staff have not already had the opportunity to be immunized, we highly recommend that medical staff update their protection by getting this fall's influenza and XBB.1.5 COVID 19 vaccines.

### What to do when you have VRI



Stay home if you feel sick and get the care and rest you need.



Notify your team members of your unavailability as soon as possible



**Routine testing for COVID-19 is no longer recommended. Please get tested only if you are eligible for COVID-19 treatment.** A positive test in the absence of symptoms is uninterpretable. A negative test in the presence of symptoms does not mean it is safe to go to work.

### When can you return to work?



When you feel better, your symptoms are improving, and you are able to work



Fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicines

Note that some symptoms (like cough or runny nose) may persist for longer than a few days. That should not keep you away from work.

**If you are immunocompromised or work with immunocompromised patients, it may be prudent to delay a return to work.**

### What to do on returning to work

- Continue to follow existing workplace infection prevention guidelines.
- Continue to observe respiratory illness etiquette.
- **Use a face mask rigorously in the first several days of your return to work.** Please follow the guidance on use of medical mask in your work setting afterwards.
- Keep your vaccinations up to date. If you have not already, please register in the BC Get Vaccinated system so you can receive an invitation to get vaccinated. Influenza and COVID-19 vaccination clinics may also accept walk-ins depending on their capacity.

If you would like to discuss your situation with an mPOSH physician, or have questions, concerns, or recommendations, please contact us at

- [mposh.vch@ubc.ca](mailto:mposh.vch@ubc.ca) (Vancouver Coastal Health medical staff)
- [mposh.phc@ubc.ca](mailto:mposh.phc@ubc.ca) (Providence Health Care medical staff)