



**RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF COVID-19
DURING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS AT THE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF PLOVDIV – 2020/2021 academic year**

The following anti-epidemic recommendations for prevention and control of COVID-19 infection are developed in reference to the beginning of the academic year 2020/2021, and in accordance with: Order No РД-01-487/31.08.2020 of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Science, Order No РД-01-489/31.08.2020 of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Science, Order No РД-01-263/14.05.2020 of the Ministry of Health, Order No РД-01-473/14.08.2020 of the Minister of Health regarding the introduction of mandatory registration, notification and reporting of COVID-19 under Ordinance No 21 for registration, notification and reporting of communicable diseases of the National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases – Sofia, and the Algorithm of disinfection measures in public facilities in the conditions of epidemic spread of COVID-19 by the Epidemiology, Parasitology and Tropical Medicine Sector.

In the absence of vaccine, distance of 1.5 to 2 meters, proper wearing of masks, decontamination of hands – washing and disinfection, and ventilation of enclosed spaces are the only paradigm for prevention and control of airborne infections. The available scientific information and discussions at the moment also indicate those as mandatory anti-epidemic measures.

Anti-epidemic measures upon organization and implementation of face-to-face lectures and exercises in the preclinical departments:

1. Clinical certification (fever, fatigue, headache, sore throat, etc.) of students and lecturers requires students to notify the lecturers and the lecturers to notify the management of their absence.

2. If it is possible to provide auditoriums and adequate time schedules for a limited number of students (up to 30 people), the lectures can be held on site.

3. Small halls are not suitable for face-to-face training.

4. **Distance** between students and lecturers: the safest one is from 1.5 to 2 meters between those present in the hall. Students are not allowed to gather in the corridors.

5. **Disinfection of hands** when entering the halls with a spray disinfectant, which will be sprayed by staff (nurse, laboratory assistant, and other personnel). If possible, dispensers must be used also.

6. The use of gloves by students is at their discretion and personal possession, but only for the relevant exercise or lecture.

7. The use of gloves is recommended for the teaching staff when collecting written works and when marking.

8. **Masks** are mandatory for students and lecturers throughout the classes.

- The mask is effective when worn properly – i.e. covering the nose, the mouth, and the chin. Before placing, the hands must be decontaminated, and after removal, without touching the front surface of the mask, it must be disposed of by throwing in the waste containers. It is

important to organize their collection in plastic bins wrapped in a plastic bag. The bins should be disinfected thereafter. After removing the mask, hands should be washed with soap and water, rubbing in soap for at least 20 seconds and/or disinfect them.

- Ordinary masks, i.e. disposable, must be changed after the end of the class, usually after an hour and a half.

- Reusable masks are also changed at least twice a day. With this type of masks there is a risk of contamination of the hands. The masks must be washed and ironed every day!!!!!!

- As a rule of thumb helmets must be used simultaneously with a mask.

The control under anti-epidemic measures should be carried out by the lecturer conducting the course/exercise, lecture, seminar, etc., and by the person in charge of the student group. Students are informed in advance that no exceptions are allowed. As a last resort, a mask from the available stock in the department is provided.

Disinfection measures in the halls:

1. They are performed by the staff responsible for the respective halls and premises. For this purpose, training is required on: disinfectants with virucidal effect; the label of the disinfectant indicates the concentration of the working solution; achievement of virucidal effect, in strict compliance with the specified consumption rate and exposure time.

2. The halls must be ventilated for 30 minutes between the groups.

3. Attention should be paid to the ventilation system, for example in the Auditorium Complex.

4. Conducting the learning process, if possible, with open windows.

5. Chemical decontamination of desk surfaces must be performed before and after completion of each session.

6. The floors of the halls should be cleaned 3 times a day.

7. Instruments and equipment are subject to disinfection/sterilization after use.

Disinfection measures in rest rooms:

1. Disinfection of washbasins and washbasin faucets 2 to 3 times a day.

2. The presence of hand sanitizer is obligatory.

3. Disinfection of the floor of the rest room 2 to 3 times a day.

The anti-epidemic regime of face-to-face lectures in clinics does not differ from that in preclinical departments.

Anti-epidemic regime of face-to-face practicals in the clinical departments:

As an axiom each patient is considered potentially infected.

The following isolation measures are of utmost importance respectively standard and special according to Ordinance No 3 of 08.05.2013 for establishment of a medical standard for prevention and control of nosocomial infections issued by the Ministry of Health, published in State Gazette, Issue No 43 of 14.05.2013, in force since 11.05.2013.

Generalized isolation measures in hospitals include:

- hand disinfection and use of gloves;

- work clothes of the medical staff (masks, goggles, helmets, etc.);

- disinfection of tools, consumables, surfaces – beds, bedside tables, door handles, medicines, washbasins, bed linen, aprons, glasses, deodorants, toiletries, toothbrushes, dentures, elevator doors, stair railings, door handles, etc.;

- equipment and mode of operation of the insulators;

- transportation of infected patients;
- collection of linen, dishes and cutlery;
- mode of personal visitors. According to Order of 31.08.2020 of the Ministry of Health – visits of external persons/visits to medical institutions as of September 1 are allowed only for relatives of patients in terminal stages;
- personnel training;
- a maximum of 2 students are allowed to participate at the bedside of patients during practical exercises.

The anti-epidemic regime in the 4 student canteens is well organized: the dining tables are at the required distance, hand disinfectants are placed, the distance between the students is observed.

Note: In front of the student dormitories at 2, Tsarevets Str. the use of a large number of available benches does not allow the required distance. It is advisable to limit their use. Students are advised not to gather in groups of more than 6 people in one room.

Anti-epidemic measures in diagnosing a patient with COVID-19 from a student dormitory: the epidemiological principle is isolation in an infectious disease clinic or in a COVID-19 ward according to the following criteria:

1. Clinical – severe or moderate-severe course;
2. Epidemiological – living in a dormitory;
3. Social – no one to take care of the patient;

In case of asymptomatic course or very mild clinical symptoms, isolation is possible in Block 2 at 2, Tsarevets Str., with 4 rooms designated as isolators. There are also 2 rooms in the Medical College. The rooms are located on the first floor. Students are not allowed to cross the corridor and are easily monitored by staff.

The isolation is terminated after a negative PCR test, conducted after receiving a referral from the Regional Health Inspectorate for payment by the Health Insurance Fund.

Anti-epidemic measures for students in contact with other positive for COVID-19 persons: Quarantine for 14 days in Block 1 at 2, Tsarevets Str., with 10 rooms designated as isolators. In the Medical College there are 3 rooms, with the possibility to increase them by another 4. The rooms are at a location, minimizing the risks.

In cases of clinical symptoms of the contact person, a PCR test is performed after receiving a referral from the Regional Health Inspectorate for payment by the Health Insurance Fund. In case of a positive result, isolation measures are applied.

In the contact persons, without symptoms during the quarantine, the quarantine is terminated after a negative PCR tests, conducted after receiving a referral from the Regional Health Inspectorate for payment by the Health Insurance Fund only for trainee doctors. No tests are required for the others.

Students and lecturers with COVID-19 infection or contact persons who are not from student dormitories are subject to measures identical to the described isolation ones and quarantine in hospital or at home.

The obligatory registration, notification and reporting of COVID-19 shall be done in accordance with Ordinance No 21 of 2005 on the procedure for registration, notification and reporting of communicable diseases.

The Ministry of Health maintains a National Information System for Combating COVID-19, which provides centralized management and storage of information on all confirmed cases of COVID-19 and quarantined persons, and provides functional support to all competent institutions – the laboratories of the Regional Health Inspectorate performing laboratory testing for COVID -19, general practitioners, medical institutions for hospital care, the National Reference Laboratory for Influenza and Acute Respiratory Diseases to the National Centre of

Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, the bodies of the Ministry of Interior, the municipalities, the National Social Security Institute, the territorial divisions of the National Social Security Institute, and the National Health Insurance Fund.

The Regional Health Inspectorate, on the territory of which a case of COVID-19 has been established, undertakes actions for examination of the patient and isolation, determination of his or her contact persons and their quarantine, establishment of an organization for their laboratory examination and medical monitoring, and introduction and control of anti-epidemic measures in the outbreak circle and the medical institutions.

All students arriving from abroad are subject to mandatory quarantine before joining the study process, if the respective country is included in the list.

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