

Protocol 36

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KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the most **prominent complaint**?
 (Difficulty breathing)
 a. Does s/he have **difficulty** speaking **between** breaths?
 1. (No) Describe to me what her/his **breathing** is like.
 b. (INEFFECTIVE or DSBB) Did s/he have any **flu-like symptoms** prior to this?
 Yes & **INEFFECTIVE** _____
 Yes & **DSBB** _____
 No _____
- (Chest pain ≥ 35)
 a. Has s/he ever had a **heart attack** or **angina** (heart pains)?
 Yes _____
 No _____
- Is s/he **completely alert** (responding appropriately)?
- (Not 1st party) Is s/he **changing color**?
 a. (Yes) Describe the color change.
- Is s/he having **chills** or **sweats**?
 Yes & chest pain/discomfort ≥ 35 _____
 Yes & chest pain/discomfort ≥ 35 _____
- (Not COVID-19) Is s/he **vomiting**?
 Yes & chest pain/discomfort ≥ 35 _____
- Does s/he have a **new cough** that **recently** started?
- Does s/he have a **sore throat**?
- Does s/he have **muscle** or **body aches**?
- Does s/he have a **fever** (hot to touch in room temperature)?
- Does s/he have a **runny** or **stuffy nose**?
- (Not COVID-19) Does s/he have **diarrhea**? * see Rule 2
- Does s/he have **fatigue** or **weakness**?
- (Not COVID-19) Does s/he have a **headache**?
 a. (Yes & no other flu-like symptoms) Was there a **sudden** onset of **severe** pain?
 Yes _____
 No _____

KEY QUESTIONS (continued)

- Does s/he have any **HIGH RISK** conditions?
 No flu-like symptoms in KQ 4-13 _____ **CC**
- POST-DISPATCH INSTRUCTIONS**
- (If regular dispatch) I'm sending the **paramedics** (ambulance) to help you now. **Stay on the line** and I'll tell you **exactly** what to do next.
 - (If reduced/limited dispatch) I'm **arranging care** for you now. An ambulance (or Care Van) will come to check you **when they are available**. This might take (several hours).
 - (No EMS response/Home quarantine instructions) Due to the **extent** of the epidemic, your condition **requires** that you **remain at home** and **avoid close contact** with others. A **healthcare professional/specialist** will (contact you soon to) **give you further instructions**. (Connect to a specialist if available.)
 - (No EMS response and alternative treatment site available) Since the **hospitals** are currently **full** and only accepting **critically ill** patients, I'm going to **give you the address/location** of the **nearest treatment center**. (Follow local instructions.) Do you have **transportation** to get there? (If no, follow local instructions.)
 - (Patient medication requested and Alert) Remind her/him to do what her/his **doctor has instructed** for these situations.
 - (≥ 1 + DELTA) If there is a **defibrillator** (AED) available, **send** someone to get it **now** in case we need it later.

DLS * Link to X-1 unless: **ABC-1**

| LEVELS | # | DETERMINANT DESCRIPTORS | CODES: LEVEL 0 (S,X) | LEVEL 1 (A,L) | LEVEL 2 (B,M) | LEVEL 3 (C,H) |
|----------|---|--|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| D | 1 | INEFFECTIVE BREATHING with flu-like symptoms | 36-D-1 | | | |
| | 2 | DIFFICULTY SPEAKING BETWEEN BREATHS with flu-like symptoms | 36-D-2 | | | |
| | 3 | Not alert with flu-like symptoms | 36-D-3 | | | |
| | 4 | CHANGING COLOR with flu-like symptoms | 36-D-4 | | | |
| C | 1 | Abnormal breathing with single flu-like symptom or Asthma/COPD | 36-C-1 | | | |
| | 2 | Abnormal breathing with multiple flu-like symptoms | 36-C-2 | | | |
| | 3 | Chest pain/discomfort ≥ 35 with single flu-like symptom | 36-C-3 | | | |
| | 4 | Chest pain/discomfort ≥ 35 with multiple flu-like symptoms | 36-C-4 | | | |
| | 5 | HIGH RISK | 36-C-5 | | | |
| A | 1 | Chest pain/discomfort < 35 with single flu-like symptom | 36-A-1 | | | |
| | 2 | Chest pain/discomfort < 35 with multiple flu-like symptoms | 36-A-2 | | | |
| | 3 | Flu-like symptoms only (cough, fever, chills, sweats, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle/body aches, fatigue/weakness, headache, etc.) | 36-A-3 | | | |

➔ Surveillance & Triage Level Suffixes

Locally enacted **Triage Level designations** may affect your agency's **response assignment**. With the exception of Level 0, the other levels allow for **locally designated**, potentially **different levels of patient triage** and **reduced response**:

- S = Level 0** (COVID-19 surveillance only) – no change in response
- A = Level 1** (COVID-19 low triage) – consider referral of ALPHA cases only
- B = Level 2** (COVID-19 moderate triage) – consider reduced response for CHARLIE cases
- C = Level 3** (COVID-19 high triage) – consider referral of some CHARLIE cases and reduced response for DELTA cases
- X = Level 0** (other disease surveillance only) – no change in response
- L = Level 1** (other disease low triage) – consider referral of ALPHA cases only
- M = Level 2** (other disease moderate triage) – consider reduced response for CHARLIE cases
- H = Level 3** (other disease high triage) – consider referral of some CHARLIE cases and reduced response for DELTA cases

INEFFECTIVE BREATHING

See **Protocol 9** for definitions.

DIFFICULTY SPEAKING BETWEEN BREATHS

See **Protocol 6** for definitions.

CHANGING COLOR

See **Protocol 6** for definitions.

HIGH RISK Conditions

Local Medical Control must define and authorize (☒) other conditions that qualify a patient as **HIGH RISK**:

- ≤ 5 years old (not COVID-19)
- ≥ 65 years old
- Blood disorders
- Diabetes
- Kidney and liver diseases/disorders
- Neurological diseases
- Pregnancy (up to 2 weeks after delivery)
- Sickle cell disease (sickle cell anemia)
- Weakened immune system (e.g., HIV/AIDS, cancer, on chronic steroids, etc.)

Other high-risk conditions of **asthma, COPD, heart disease, and angina** are covered in other **CHARLIE-level Determinant Codes**.

Approval signature of local Medical Control _____ Date approved _____

Rules

1. Once **surveillance** or **triage** is **locally approved**, use **Protocol 36** for the medical (non-trauma) Chief Complaints of **Breathing Problems** (Protocol 6), **Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort** (Protocol 10), **Headache** (Protocol 18 – not COVID-19), and **Sick Person** (Protocol 26). Protocol 36 provides **shunts** to these protocols when the outbreak disease is **not likely** in the patient.
2. Once **two flu-like symptoms** in Key Questions 4–13 have been identified, **skip** the rest of the questions to Key Question 14 and then **choose** the appropriate **Determinant Code**. If **positive flu-like symptoms** were mentioned in **Case Entry**, these Key Questions **do not have to be asked again**. More than one flu-like symptom **creates a higher likelihood** that the Chief Complaint is actually the current outbreak illness.
3. If **initial information** identifies the Chief Complaint as **Breathing Problems** (6), **Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort** (10), **Headache** (18 – not COVID-19), or **Sick Person** (26), and other flu-like symptoms are **not identified**, return to the **original Chief Complaint** and **complete the call**.
4. If the patient **had a fever** but took aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Motrin), and the **fever is now gone**, answer the fever Key Question as **“yes”**.
5. If the complaint is **Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort** (≥ 35) and **sweats, vomiting**, or a **history of heart attack or angina** are later identified, **go to Protocol 10** and complete the call. While **sweats and vomiting** are symptoms of flu and other flu-like illnesses, they may also be **present in heart attacks**.

Axioms

1. It is predicted that a pandemic, epidemic, or outbreak will cause an **increase** in the

number of **severe breathing problems** reported (more 6-D-1 cases) **unless Protocol 36 triage is implemented**.

2. **Pregnant women** (including those up to 2 weeks after delivery) are generally more susceptible to infection from **flu, flu-like illnesses, viral respiratory infections, and hemorrhagic fever**. Also, once infected, they are typically **more at risk for complications, hospitalizations, and death**.
3. The **HIGH RISK** group of **neurological diseases** includes: cerebral palsy, stroke history (CVA/TIA), multiple sclerosis (MS), muscular dystrophy (MD), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), motor neuron disease (MND), poliomyelitis, and myasthenia gravis. If a mentioned disease is questionable, consider it as **positive**.

Pandemic

An epidemic that becomes **widespread**, affecting an **entire region, continent, or the world**.

Epidemic

A **sudden outbreak** of a disease or an **unusually large number** of disease cases in a **single community or relatively small area**. Disease may spread from person to person and/or through the exposure of many persons to a single source, such as a water supply.

Outbreak

A **sudden increase** in the number of disease cases, or occurrence of a **larger than expected number** of cases, within a **short** period of time.

Flu-like Symptoms (may be updated as more is known about specific symptoms at the time of an outbreak)

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Chills or sweats
- Cough (recent onset)
- Diarrhea*
- Difficulty breathing
- Fatigue/Weakness
- Fever (> 100° F/38° C)
- Headache*
- Muscle or body aches
- Nasal congestion/ Stuffy nose
- New or persistent respiratory problems
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Vomiting*

*Symptom excluded from COVID-19 definition