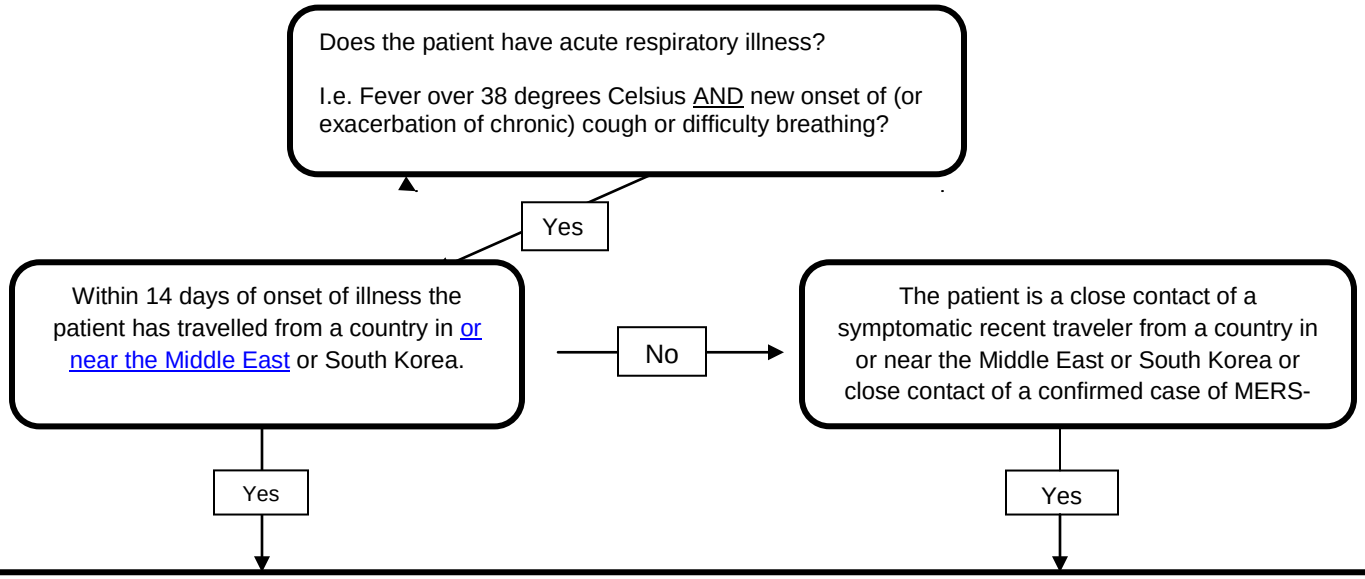
Initial Screening and Management of Patients with Suspected Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)

Exposure Risk Assessment for MERS-CoV upon initial triage/registration:



- Patients with suspected or confirmed MERS-CoV should be **assessed in a timely manner and placed in a private room.** Encourage **respiratory hygiene** (i.e. using tissues, procedure mask, hand hygiene). In waiting areas, there should be at least a **2 meter spatial separation** between patients who have signs and symptoms of suspected or confirmed Influenza-like illness and all other patients/visitors. Patient must wear a procedure mask.
- **Initiate Contact and Droplet Precautions** (Gloves, gowns, mask and eye protection) when within 2 meters of patient suspected or confirmed to have MERS-COV infection. Visitors should be limited and they should follow the additional precautions in place while in room.
- **Aerosol generating medical procedures** (I.e. bronchoscopy) should be performed in **airborne isolation rooms** and only if medically necessary. The number of healthcare workers present should be limited during these procedures and a respirator (N95) mask should be worn in addition to other PPE.
- Patient **movement/ transport** should be restricted to essential diagnostic and therapeutic tests only. If patients need to leave their room they should wear a procedure mask, be instructed on respiratory and hand hygiene techniques, and reminded of the need to adhere to precautions.
- Include the need for additional precautions in your transfer of accountability to other areas (i.e. inpatient unit, radiology, etc.)
- **Test** for pathogen according to Protocol for Microbiological Investigations of Severe Acute Respiratory Infections. (http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/eri-ire/proto-sari-iras-eng.php). **Call the microbiologist on call through Locating (473-2222)** to discuss the optimal specimen type and collection procedure.
- **Notify**: **Medical Officer of Health** (902-481-5800) and Infection Prevention and Control (902-473-2659). After hours call 473-2222 to locate these departments.

***Please Note: All patients with acute Influenza like Illness need to be managed with the same approach regardless of the causative microorganism. With MERS-CoV, it is important to ascertain the patient's travel history or contact with those who have recently travelled to the Middle east, South Korea, or neighboring countries.**