



MINISTERO DELLA SALUTE

Istituto Superiore di Sanità
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WHO Collaborating Centre
On Vigilance and Surveillance for
Human Cells, Tissues and Organs

Subject: indication to perform SWAB test to investigate the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in organ transplant recipients from living and deceased donor.

In consideration of the provisions of the various Prime Minister's and ministerial decrees, and in relation to the clinical fragility of patients on the waiting list, as well as the state of immunosuppression that the patient will experience after the transplant, the following indications are recommended:

- 1) Before undergoing transplant, all recipients awaiting solid organ transplantation both from living and deceased donor, shall be tested through nasopharyngeal swab for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 on their respiratory secretions, both if they are symptomatic or paucisymptomatic for COVID-19 or if they have been in contact with SARS-CoV-2 positive subjects;
- 2) For recipients awaiting solid organ transplantation from a deceased donor, who do not present symptoms and for whom contacts with COVID-19 positive subjects can be reasonably excluded, the decision to perform the swab test for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 on their respiratory secretions is left to the doctor of reference, in compliance with specific hospital and regional provisions, and to the timing of the test's results, which may not be compatible with the transplant;
- 3) As a precaution, the swab test for SARS-CoV-2 on respiratory secretions is recommended in asymptomatic recipients awaiting organ transplantation from a living donor, within 72 hours from the expected date of transplantation. In this case, the possibility of arranging the test and therefore the time it takes for the results to be available, does not interfere with the transplant.

We highlight that the nasopharyngeal swab on asymptomatic patients has an extremely low level of sensitivity and a negative result may not exclude a SARS-CoV-2 infection during the incubation period.