



## COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

6<sup>th</sup> April 2020

### How does testing for COVID-19 work?

Testing for COVID-19 will only be done in discussion with one of the IST Medical Doctors and with agreement of the patient. The IST Clinic collaborates with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to provide testing services. When requested, a mobile testing team from the MoH visits the Clinic to administer the test. The test is a swab of the throat and nose. Results typically take 24 hours. The Clinic will also administer blood tests to check for other possible infections, such as malaria, that require medical care. If you are positive for COVID-19, depending on your symptoms, you may be advised to self-isolate at home, treated at the IST Clinic, or referred to Aga Khan hospital.

### If I am positive for COVID-19, what are my options for health care?

- It is important to remember that an estimated 80% of patients with COVID-19 do not develop symptoms that require urgent medical care. The Clinic staff will **assess your risk** of developing a serious infection, including underlying conditions, and can **conduct lab tests to monitor if the infection is developing in a more serious way and to identify any complications**.
- For patients with mild symptoms, we advise self-isolation at home for 14 days. The Clinic will monitor your progress through regular phone calls and follow-up visits if necessary.
- For patients with complications or co-infection with another disease (e.g. malaria), we will provide care in the Clinic's special facility, including medical observation, providing an IV drip and treatment for co-infections. We will check the oxygen saturation levels of COVID-19 patients as that is a reliable indicator of the severity of illness. If oxygen saturation levels are too low, the patient will be given oxygen and monitored for improvement.
- If a patient requires longer than 1-2 days of medical observation and needs a constant oxygen supply, we will refer the patient to Aga Khan Hospital.

### I have a fever. What should I do?

Fever is a symptom of COVID-19, but also of **malaria, dengue and other infections**. Malaria and dengue are common in the rainy season and require urgent medical care. If you have a fever, it is important to contact the IST Clinic for a correct diagnosis and necessary treatment.

### I am unable to come to the IST Clinic. What should I do?

The IST Clinic is offering **house visits** for those who are unable to visit the Clinic in person. This service includes a lab technician to take blood tests. Contact the Clinic to arrange a house visit. As addresses can be difficult to locate in Dar es Salaam, it would be appreciated if you can send a car with driver to transport Clinic staff to and from your home.

### How has the IST Clinic prepared for COVID-19?

The IST Clinic is very well prepared and has put the following measures in place:

- To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for our patients and staff, suspected COVID-19 patients are being evaluated and treated in a purpose-built facility adjacent to the Clinic. Non-COVID-19 patients can visit the Clinic as usual. Upon arrival at the Clinic, **trained volunteers** will provide you with instructions on where to go.
- We are offering **house visits** for those who are unable to visit the Clinic in person.
- All **normal IST Clinic services are ongoing**, including laboratory and pharmacy services.

- The IST Clinic is following medical guidelines and protocols for COVID-19 from the Tanzania Ministry of Health, which are based on experiences and expertise from China and Europe, and we are constantly updating our medical knowledge to ensure the best care.
- The Clinic has a good supply of oxygen. If a patient is likely to need a constant oxygen supply for several days, the patient will be transported by ambulance to Aga Khan Hospital for admission. Aga Khan Hospital has 7 ventilators in its isolation unit, and at least 15 ventilators in its intensive care unit (ICU) which could be used in case of emergency. SALI Hospital has one ventilator.

**Where can I find advice on how to self-isolate at home?**

We are preparing advice on how to self-isolate at home, which can be accessed on the IST Clinic Website or Facebook page.

**I have a question about COVID-19. What should I do?**

Check the IST Clinic website ([www.istclinic.com](http://www.istclinic.com)) and [Facebook](#) page for updates. You can also contact the IST Clinic by email or phone.

A phone consultation with one of the medical doctors can be booked with the reception staff. For a phone consultation, you will be charged a small fee (\$20 for members, \$30 non-members).

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