

# NURSING PRACTICE ALERT

## Professional and Patient Advocacy During the Omicron Surge

### Are you symptomatic?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), people with Covid-19 have had a wide range of symptoms — ranging from asymptomatic or mild symptoms to severe illness, regardless of vaccination or booster status.

- » Fever or chills
- » Cough
- » Fatigue
- » Muscle or body aches
- » New loss of taste or smell
- » Sore throat
- » Headache
- » Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- » Congestion or runny nose
- » Nausea or vomiting
- » Diarrhea

A priority of registered nurses is to advocate for our patient's health, this includes advocating for our own health and safety. Nurses know the best way to protect our patients, ourselves, and preserve the integrity of the health care system amidst this infectious disease crisis is to advocate for the highest standards of care **for our patients and for ourselves.**

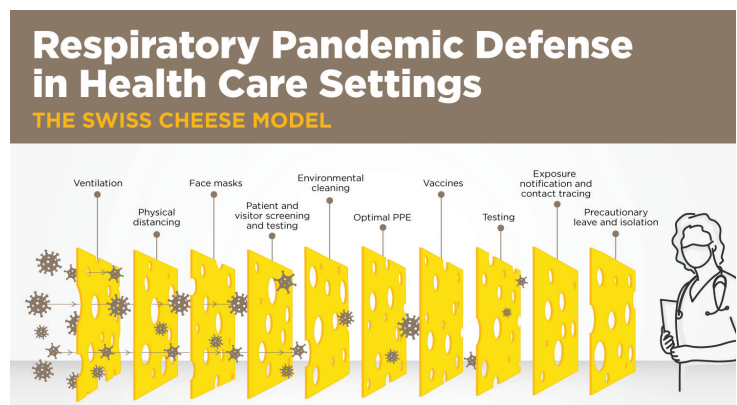
We want to protect patients, not infect them! If you think you have been exposed or are experiencing symptoms or have tested positive for Covid-19; trust your professional judgment. Call your primary care physician, call employee health, call infection control, file a workers compensation claim with your employer, etc. Take the necessary steps to ensure you are doing your part to stop the spread.

### How to protect yourself at work

Omicron's substantial immune evasive properties are resulting in high numbers of nurses and other health care workers contracting SARS-CoV-2 in their workplace, regardless of vaccination or booster status. A central component to all personal and professional decision-making is the precautionary principle. We are still learning about specific variables that might be unique to Omicron.<sup>1</sup>

#### Protect yourself at work:

- » Utilize **universal airborne precautions** irrespective of personal vaccination status. Universal airborne precautions are recommended for direct-care nurses in all patient care settings.
- » Demand PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)! Protective PPE for nurses and other health care workers must include, at a minimum, N95 respirators or higher, isolation gowns, eye protection, and gloves in ALL patient care settings, irrespective of vaccination or booster status.



For more information, visit:  
[bit.ly/NNU-NP-Covid-Omicron-Surge](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html)

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html>

#ProtectNurses. All Our Lives Depend On It.

