



## Guidance on Perioperative Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing During the COVID-19 Pandemic

### POETTS statement

In the context of the current COVID-19 Pandemic, there are a number of specific considerations that may constitute a risk to patients and/or staff in relation to cardiopulmonary exercise testing:

1. The risk to the patient of SARS-CoV-2 (Corona virus) infection as a result of an additional visit to the hospital, especially given that many pre-operative patients have comorbidities that place them at high risk for adverse outcome from COVID-19.
2. The risk of transmission of SARS-COV-2 to the testing staff and other patients, should the testing subject be unexpectedly positive.
3. The theoretical risk of contaminating the patient from the CPET equipment, which should be avoided by appropriate cleaning of equipment as recommended by manufacturers.

### POETTS recommend

1. That routine cardiopulmonary exercise testing should not continue during the pandemic.
2. That cardiopulmonary exercise testing should only be considered, on a best interests basis, if it will fundamentally alter a patient's management with regards to surgery **and** the surgery will take place imminently (ie not in the context of cancelled elective surgery). This decision should balance the potential risks of a hospital visit and CPET against any potential benefits to the patient.
3. That all patients should be screened for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 prior to testing. No symptomatic patients should be tested.
4. That a CPET test should not involve an additional visit to the hospital and should be combined with other essential visits.
5. That testing staff should wear PPE in accordance with the recommendations for contact with a patient of unknown Covid status (in the UK, follow Public Health England guidance).