

COVID-19 and School

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever (at least 100.4°F)
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

It can take up to 10 days for people with COVID-19 to start showing symptoms. Some people have very mild symptoms, some people become really sick, and some people with COVID-19 don't have any symptoms at all.

For more information visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm.

What steps can I take to prevent my student from getting COVID-19?

- Get your child vaccinated, including a booster dose when eligible. Children ages 5 and older are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Booster doses are also recommended for everyone 12 years and older.
- Make sure they wear a well-fitting mask in public indoor settings, including schools. Learn more at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/mask.htm.
- Help them avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your own home.
- Remind them to stay 6 feet apart from other people. In classrooms where mask use is universal, 3 feet of physical distance may be appropriate.
- Help your student monitor their health—look for symptoms and take their temperature daily.
- Help them wash their hands often.

For more detailed information about protecting your student from COVID-19 visit: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/parents.htm.

When should my student stay home?

Your student should stay home and isolate if they are symptomatic. Your student is considered symptomatic if they have one of the symptoms marked with a (*) or two of the other symptoms above baseline for them:

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

Your student should stay home and quarantine if they are not up to date with their vaccines and they have close contact with someone with COVID-19.

How long does my student need to stay home if they tested positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19?

If your student has symptoms they should stay away from others and isolate for at least 5 full days. They can end isolation if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms have improved. They should continue to wear a well-fitting mask when around others for an additional 5 days.

If your student does not have symptoms and they tested positive for COVID-19, they should stay home for at least 5 days after the day they were tested and keep away from other people as much as possible. They can end isolation after 5 full days if they continue to have no symptoms and wear a well-fitting mask when around others for an additional 5 days.

What if my student becomes sick but has a negative PCR* test for COVID-19?

They should stay home until they are feeling better and they have not had a fever for 24 hours without using any medication to reduce fever.

If they visit a doctor and they tell you your student has something other than COVID-19 (like the flu or hand, foot, and mouth) then you should follow the doctor's guidelines for exclusion requirements for that disease. Review the **Wisconsin Childhood Communicable Diseases Wall Chart, P-44397** for additional information.

*A negative antigen test result from a symptomatic student or staff member should be confirmed with a PCR test, collected within 48 hours of the initial test. The student or staff member should isolate and siblings and household members should quarantine while waiting for the PCR results.

What is "Close Contact"?

Close contacts have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are at a greater risk of getting sick and spreading the disease to others. Examples of close contact are being within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes, sharing a drinking glass or eating utensil, physically touching the person or things that may have their germs on them like dirty tissues, or being coughed or sneezed on.

What if my student came in "close contact" with someone who has COVID-19?

Your student should be tested for COVID-19 at least 5 days after close contact and monitor for symptoms for 10 days, even if they are up to date with their vaccines. There are many ways to get tested for COVID-19 in Wisconsin. Contact your health care provider, your local pharmacy, or look for a community testing site in your area. You can also use a self-test. Contact **211** to be connected to resources.

If your student is not up to date with their vaccines, they should stay home to quarantine for at least 5 days after their last close contact with the person with COVID-19. They should wear a well-fitting mask at home and in public until 10 days after their last close contact.

If your student is up to date with their vaccines, they do not need to quarantine, but should wear a mask in public indoor spaces for 10 days after their last close contact.

If at any time, your student develop symptoms or tests positive, they should immediately isolate from others.

If my student is a "close contact" and there are other children in our home who do not have symptoms, should they stay home too, or continue coming to school?

No, your other students may continue to go to work and school. If the child who was in close contact gets sick, then your other students should stay home.

What if we live with someone who has COVID-19?

If someone you live with has symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 and they are unable to completely isolate, your quarantine must extend. All of the following criteria must be met before you and others in the home can start your final 5 days of quarantine:

- At least 5 days have passed since anyone in the house has tested positive for COVID-19 or began having COVID-19 symptoms.
- Anyone who had symptoms or tested positive was able to wear a well-fitting mask around others in the house; or at least 10 days have passed since the day of their positive test (if asymptomatic) or their symptoms began.
- Anyone who developed symptoms is improving and has been fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for at least 24 hours.

How do I talk with my student about staying home from school and COVID-19?

Here are some tips for talking with children:

- Remain calm while talking.
- Let them know they are safe and it is okay to feel upset.
- Make yourself available to listen and to talk.
- Avoid language that might blame or stigmatize others.
- Pay attention to what children see or hear on the media.
- Provide truthful and developmental appropriate information.
- Talk about new actions that may be taken at school to help protect your students and staff.

Visit the **[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)** and **[Department of Public Instruction](#)** for even more tips on taking with your children about COVID-19.