

# SCHOOL COVID-19 FAQ FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS\*

## Wisconsin Department of Health Services School Outbreak Guidelines

- 1. What are the symptoms of COVID-19 for exclusion from school based on Wisconsin Department of Health Services guidelines?**
  - *Any 1 of these symptoms:* Cough; Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; New loss of taste or smell; **-OR-**
  - *Any 2 of these symptoms:* Congestion or runny nose; Fever or chills; Nausea or vomiting; Diarrhea; Headache; Fatigue; Muscle aches; Sore throat

**NOTE:** A child may have COVID-19 with any one symptom.
- 2. What are the definitions of isolation, quarantine and close contact?**
  - **Isolation:** Keeping a child sick with COVID-19 away from healthy people. This usually means that the sick person rests in their own bedroom or area of your home and stays away from others. This includes staying home from school.
  - **Quarantine:** Separating a child who was around someone with COVID-19, just in case they get sick. Quarantine prevents people from accidentally spreading the virus to other people even before they realize they are sick. This includes staying home from school.
  - **Close Contact:** Being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes total in a day AND/OR having physical contact with a case AND/OR having direct contact with respiratory secretions of a case (e.g. coughing, sneezing, shared drinking glass, shared food, shared personal items) AND/OR lives or stays overnight with a case.
- 3. When should I keep my child home from school?**
  - When your child is sick with symptoms of COVID-19.
  - When your child is tested, they should stay home at least until results are received and then follow *Table for Symptomatic Children*.
  - When they are told to *isolate* because they are diagnosed with COVID-19 (they are a case).
  - When they are told to *quarantine* because they are a close contact to a COVID-19 case.
- 4. What will happen if my child becomes sick while in school?**
  - Your child will be moved to a designated area away from others.
  - You will be contacted and asked to immediately pick up your child from school if symptoms warrant it. Vomiting, diarrhea and fever – alone or together – should exclude a child from school but they do not necessarily indicate the need to test or isolate for COVID-19.
- 5. What should I do when my child is sick and will miss school?**
  - Call your school and provide the reason for missing school and your child's symptoms.
  - If warranted, call your child's primary care provider for guidance regarding symptoms.
- 6. What will happen if there is a case of COVID-19 in the school?**
  - A letter will be sent to all parents/guardians and school employees with notification of a case in the school.
  - Those children and employees identified as close contacts to a case will be contacted by the local health department and told to quarantine at home for 14 days after the last exposure. This quarantine will not begin until an exposure has been confirmed. **NOTE:** If your child becomes symptomatic during quarantine, the period of time they must remain at home may change (see *Table for Symptomatic Children*).
  - The case will be isolated at home until the case meets the return-to-school criteria (the local health department will help determine this).

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**7. When can my child return to school AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN SICK?**

<b>FOR SYMPTOMATIC CHILDREN TO RETURN TO SCHOOL</b>	
<p><b>Not tested for COVID-19 -AND- Not a contact to a case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child must remain home for at least 10 days since the first COVID-19 symptoms for exclusion began (see #1) <b>AND</b> child must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours (<i>follow your school policy if longer</i>) <b>AND</b> child must have improvement of symptoms. <b>NOTE:</b> All three criteria must be met.</li> <li><b>EXCEPTION:</b> If your child is diagnosed by a healthcare provider with another condition that explains the symptoms, such as influenza or strep throat, the exclusion period may be according to the diagnosed disease.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Not tested for COVID-19 -AND- Is a contact to a case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child must quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the case. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of exposure would be the last day of isolation for the case <b>AND</b> child must remain home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began <b>AND</b> child must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours (<i>follow your school policy if longer</i>) <b>AND</b> child must have improvement of symptoms.</li> <li><b>NOTE:</b> These could run simultaneously, and all four criteria must be met.</li> <li>Local health department will work to identify and quarantine close contacts to cases and help determine return to school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tested and negative for COVID-19 -AND- Not a contact to a case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (<i>follow your school policy if longer</i>) <b>AND</b> child must have improvement of symptoms.</li> <li>If your child is diagnosed by a healthcare provider with another condition that explains the symptoms, such as influenza or strep throat, the exclusion period may be according to the diagnosed disease.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tested and negative for COVID-19 -AND- Is a contact to a case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child must quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the case. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of exposure would be the last day of isolation for the case <b>AND</b> child must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (<i>follow your school policy if longer</i>) <b>AND</b> child must have improvement of symptoms. <b>NOTE:</b> All three criteria must be met.</li> <li>Local health department will work to identify and quarantine close contacts to cases and help determine return to school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tested and positive for COVID-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child must isolate at home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began <b>AND</b> child must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours <b>AND</b> child must have improvement in symptoms. <b>NOTE:</b> All three criteria must be met.</li> <li>Repeat testing is <b>NOT</b> recommended for making decisions about when your child can return to work or school.</li> <li>Local health department will work to identify and quarantine close contacts to cases and help determine return to school.</li> </ul>

**8. When can my child return to school if they ARE NOT SICK AND HAVE BEEN QUARANTINED as a contact to a case?**

- Your child must quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure before returning to school. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of exposure may be the last day of isolation for the case.
- NOTE:** If your child becomes sick during the quarantine period, see *Table for Symptomatic Children* above.

**9. Where can my child get tested?**

- There is a current shortage of COVID-19 tests. You may call your healthcare provider or go to the Wisconsin website for community testing sites: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/testing.htm>

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