

SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

When should my child be kept home from school? Each morning you should do a COVID-19 assessment before sending your child to school. The assessment tool (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>) will guide whether or not your child can go to school that day.

My child has woken up not feeling well, what do I do? If you notice that your child has new or worsening symptoms, what you do depends on the symptom and how usual they are for your child.

| Symptoms | Instructions |
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| <p>If the student has ONE new or worsening symptom (that is not related to a known cause or condition) that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat • Stuffy nose/runny nose • Headache • Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea • Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise | <p>Stay home for 24 hours to see if the symptom gets better or worse.</p> <p>Return to School: If symptoms are improving, student can return to school when well enough to do so without a COVID-19 test if they pass the Ontario School Screening Tool.</p> <p>If the symptom gets worse, or new symptoms appear, follow instructions in box below.</p> |
| <p>If the student has ONE new or worsening symptom that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever/chills • Cough • Shortness of breath • Decreased or loss of smell or taste <p>OR</p> <p>If the student has TWO or MORE new or worsening symptoms (that are not related to a known cause or condition) that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat • Stuffy nose/runny nose • Headache • Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea • Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise | <p>The student should isolate immediately and consider getting tested for COVID-19 OR talk with a doctor/health care provider to get assessed.</p> <p>Return to School: No test: If you choose not to test the student, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the date their symptom(s) first appear. They may return to school after 10 days if they do not have a fever (without taking medication), and their symptoms are improving for 24 hours.</p> <p>If student gets an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider, they can return to school 24 hours after symptoms improve or as directed by the health care provider.</p> <p>Negative test: If the student receives a negative test result (they do not have COVID-19), they can return to school if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not have a fever (without using medication) • It has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started improving • They have not been told by public health to self-isolate <p>Positive test: If the student receives a positive test result (they have COVID-19):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWHU will contact the student/caregiver directly. The student must continue to self-isolate. • The student can return to school only when cleared by NWHU. • NWHU will also contact the school. |

A medical note or proof of test is not needed to return to school.

My child has a runny nose, what should I do? If your child's only symptom is a runny nose, you should keep your child home and monitor their symptoms as you would in any other year. When they feel better, they are ready to go back to school/child care and no COVID-19 testing is needed. If they get worse or develop other symptoms, you should contact their health care provider for more advice. Mild symptoms known to persist in young children (e.g., runny nose) may be ongoing at time of return to school/child care if other symptoms have been resolved.

Who in my family needs to be tested along with my child? If your child has been identified as needing a test and everyone else in the family is well, no testing of other family members is needed. If your child tests positive for COVID-19, the local public health unit will contact you/your child and make a plan for additional testing of all close contacts.

Do I need a note from a doctor before my child goes back to school/child care or a copy of a negative test result? No, you do not need a note from your doctor or proof of a negative test before your child returns to school/ childcare.

I need more information to feel confident in my assessment, what do I do? If you need additional information about COVID-19 or have a question specific to your child and their health, please contact your health care provider.

What temperature is considered a fever? Temperatures of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

What should I do if my child is sick and I am keeping them home? Notify the school, as you usually would, including information about symptoms of illness. Follow the instructions provided by the [Ontario School Screening Tool](#).

Do siblings with no symptoms need to stay home if one child is sick? Siblings who have no symptoms of illness can continue to attend school, unless they have been directed by public health to self-isolate because of contact or probable contact with COVID-19.

What happens if my child gets a symptom of illness at school? Your school will have a specific procedure to ensure your child is brought to a room where they can maintain their distance from others, and be monitored by staff. You will be notified and required to pick up your child as quickly as possible. The school will provide further instructions to you.

What if my child has a chronic condition like allergies and always or regularly has symptoms like COVID-19? You should talk with your child's school and your health care provider to ensure awareness of chronic conditions that might appear to be COVID-19 symptoms. Your school might have a form for you to fill out. You should monitor your child daily for any unusual, unexpected or changes in their condition that could be symptoms of COVID-19; these would be reasons to keep them home and consider testing for COVID-19 or visiting your health care provider for assessment.



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What if I think it is just a common cold? Cold and flu symptoms can be similar to COVID-19. A health care provider cannot rule out COVID-19 without a test. If your child has cold-like symptoms, complete the Ontario School Screening Tool and follow the instructions.

TESTING

Where can I get tested? Information about testing can be found here: <https://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/self-assessment.aspx>. Test results may take 5-10 days to receive.

POSITIVE TESTS

What if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

- Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 should not attend school until they receive direction by their local public health unit or health care provider.
- Any individuals who test positive must remain in isolation for 10 days from the date when symptoms started or 10 days from the date of the test if there are no symptoms. Retesting is not recommended and doesn't change the 10 day isolation requirement.
- The NWHU will contact you for follow-up.
- The NWHU will notify the school that there is a positive case in the school.

What if a parent or household contact tests positive? If a parent receives a positive test for COVID-19, he or she is not obligated to inform the school of their test result, however, it is strongly recommended. Children in a household where a parent or other member has tested positive should stay home and isolate for 14 days. The Northwestern Health Unit will provide direction to close contacts, including household members of a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

WHAT IF THERE IS A POSITIVE CASE IN THE SCHOOL?

What will my child have to do? Northwestern Health Unit will immediately get in touch with the case and start contact tracing. If your child is identified as a close contact, you will be contacted directly and given advice. All students and staff determined to be at high risk will be directed to isolate and be tested (voluntary). If public health advises that a class, cohort or a school should be closed for a period of time, parents, students and staff will be notified immediately.

Will you tell the public if there is a case in the school? The Northwestern Health Unit will not release this information to the public, however, the Government of Ontario requires that all schools and school boards post information to their websites about confirmed cases of COVID-19 that involve a student or a staff member. In the interests of privacy, information provided to school communities will not identify the student or staff member that has received a positive COVID-19 test. Notice of any closures of classes, cohorts or schools will be posted on school websites and school board COVID-19 advisory sections.

When would a school be shut down? The Northwestern Health Unit will declare an outbreak and provide direction on outbreak control measures. This may include a partial or full school closure, based on the scope of the outbreak. It will depend on each scenario. Though an outbreak will be declared if two or more lab confirmed cases are linked to the school setting and at least one could have been acquired in the school, there is no set number on when a school must be closed.



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