

What to do if Your Child has Symptoms of Illness

Instructions for caregivers

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 it is important that students and staff with any symptoms of illness do not attend school until they are no longer at risk of spreading infection. Schools must send anyone home from school who appears to be unwell and report information to Northwestern Health Unit. If your child is staying home because of illness or has been sent home from school because of illness, keep them home, limit contact with others, seek medical advice as necessary, and follow the instructions below.



When to get tested

If your child has any of the following symptoms, use the tool at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> and follow the recommendations. It will be suggested that you arrange for COVID-19 testing if your child has symptoms of:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion (in absence of underlying reasons for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies, post nasal drip, etc.)
- Pink eye
- Feeling unwell, chills, headache, extreme tiredness, falling down often, sluggish, lack appetite.

Anyone waiting for test results must self-isolate and cannot attend school in person.

Where to get tested

Visit <https://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/self-assessment.aspx> to find testing information for your community.

If your child tests positive:

- Northwestern Health Unit will call you to gather details about your child's contacts. If your child has been in the school during the infectious period, NWHU will contact the school to get information about school contacts.
- A "contact" is defined as someone who has spent at least 15 minutes within 2 metres of a confirmed case. NWHU will give you and all close contacts direction on self-isolating.



Northwestern
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If you choose not to get your child tested:

If you choose not to take your student for testing, they must stay home from school

- Until 14 days after the symptoms of illness started OR
- At least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, if an alternate diagnosis has been provided by a health care provider OR
- At least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved AND a health care provider assessed the student and did NOT recommend testing for COVID 19.

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

What if my child was sent home, but I know this is just a regular symptom of a chronic condition like allergies?

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. Documentation may be required by the school.

When can my child return to school?

- **No test:** 14 days after start of symptoms, if symptoms have resolved OR at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved with an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, OR at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved and a health care provider has assessed the student and did not recommend testing for COVID-19.
- **Negative test:** return to school after at least 24 hours without symptoms (unless they have been a close contact of a known COVID-19 case*)
- **If positive test:** return to school at the direction of Northwestern Health Unit. A negative test as proof of clearance is not required.

***What if a close contact of a student (e.g. sibling, parent) tests positive?**

If a student is identified as a close contact of a positive case, they should go home immediately to self-isolate and arrange for testing. If a student is self-isolating after a high-risk exposure (e.g. a close contact of a known COVID-19 case) they can return to school at the end of their full 14 day self-isolation period as they may be incubating COVID-19. If they should develop symptoms or test positive, then they will be managed as a case of COVID-19.

If my child is ill, do other household members also need to isolate while waiting for test results, or can siblings attend school and parents go to work?

Currently the risk of COVID-19 is low in the region. Parents and siblings can attend school and go to work as long as they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and they have not been directed to isolate by public health (Northwestern Health Unit).

If you have questions, please call the NWHU COVID-19 Hotline at 1-866-468-2240.



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