

Back to school during the pandemic



What happens when someone at school gets COVID-19?

A student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19

The school or health department learns about the case and notifies the other organization.

Under the direction of the health department, the school sends a general notification alerting parents and staff that there is a case while protecting the infected person's confidentiality.

The school and health department identify close contacts. Close contacts are notified by the health department and placed in quarantine based on the date of their last exposure and their COVID history. Most people will be required to quarantine for 14 days. Those who have had a positive COVID test in the last five months only need to quarantine for 10 days. Those who have been fully vaccinated within the last three months do not need to quarantine as long as they remain symptom free.

If the close contact does not develop symptoms, they return to school after their quarantine.

If the close contact develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, the person follows health department directions for self-isolation.



Disclaimer—This information is based on the latest information and is subject to change. (2/16/21)

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What happens when someone at school gets COVID-19?

1. The school and health department learn about the case.

Only a select few at the school will know the identity of the person. Those few people will be critical to helping the health department figure out who were close contacts to the case and in determining what areas of the school need special disinfecting and cleaning. The COVID positive person's identity is kept confidential to respect their privacy as well as following regulations of FERPA and HIPAA.

2. Contact tracing begins.

A person with COVID-19 is considered contagious starting two days (48 hours) before they started having symptoms. If they never have symptoms, they are considered contagious starting two days (48 hours) before their COVID-19 test was performed.

3. Quarantine close contacts.

What is a close contact? A close contact typically is someone who was within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes.

Close contacts to a person with COVID-19 are at risk of getting sick, and they must be identified and quarantined. Quarantine separates people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. The large majority of close contacts do not get COVID-19, but we must be cautious because it is so contagious.

But what about contacts to close contacts? Since the close contacts are not yet known to be infected, the contacts to those contacts do not need to be quarantined and do not need to be identified or contacted.

EXAMPLE

Bob sits next to Moe in class. Moe gets sick with COVID-19. Bob needs to be quarantined, even though he is healthy at this time. Bob plays on the football team, and Moe does not. No one on the football team has been near Moe. Therefore, the football team doesn't need to be notified about Moe being sick or worry about Bob being quarantined. Odds are, Bob will not get sick and will be back to school and football in 14 days.



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What if someone has symptoms or was exposed outside school?

◆ A staff member or student develops COVID-19 symptoms.

Has the person been tested for COVID-19?

NO - The person is excluded from school until:

- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- 24 hours without a fever and no fever reducing medicine AND
- Symptoms have improved (cough, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing)

OR

Their healthcare provider gives them an alternative diagnosis for their symptoms. The student or staff person may return based on the guidance for their diagnosis/ predominant symptoms.

YES - The person is excluded from school until the results of the test are negative, and they meet any other return to school requirements, for example no fever or vomiting for 24 hours without medicine. If COVID test results are positive, they must follow the conditions above, including waiting at least 10 days before returning to any school activities.

◆ A person is a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case.

The person is excluded from school and school activities until they have quarantined for the number of days required based on their COVID history. Most people will be required to quarantine for 14 days. Those who have had a positive COVID test in the last five months only need to quarantine for 10 days. Those who have been fully vaccinated within the last three months do not need to quarantine as long as they remain symptom free. Fully vaccinated means having received the required number of shots for your vaccine at least two weeks before the recent exposure.

◆ A person is a household member or close contact of someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a pending COVID-19 test.

Household members, classmates and other close contacts of a symptomatic but undiagnosed person or a quarantined person may continue to attend school and should monitor for symptoms. If they develop symptoms, they should stay home and call their medical provider to be tested for COVID-19. If a household member tests positive, any person in the house is now a close-contact for a COVID-19 positive case and should quarantine according to the guidelines above.



This is a summary document that may not cover all scenarios. If you are concerned about a COVID-19 exposure, please contact your local health department for guidance.

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How does COVID spread?

◆ Droplets



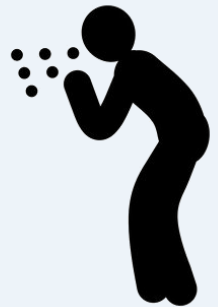
Droplets are small particles that enter the air when we cough, sneeze, laugh, sing, yell, and talk. Basically, they are little flecks of spit. Droplets tend to settle out of the air after traveling up to several feet from the person that released them. Droplets can also spread directly by sharing personal items like drinks, hookah, vape pens, silverware, or other things that go from one person's mouth to another person's.

We can reduce the spread of droplets by wearing face coverings, avoiding large crowded groups, and staying more than 6 feet apart from each other.

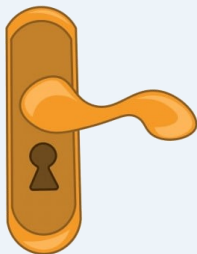
◆ Aerosols

Aerosols are even smaller particles that are created when we breathe, talk, sing, sneeze, or cough. They are lighter and can stay in the air much longer than droplets but dry up more quickly.

We can reduce the spread of aerosols by increasing outdoor air ventilation or filtering air that is being recirculated.



◆ Objects



Objects can spread the COVID-19 virus when droplets or aerosols settle on them, bringing germs, or if someone has the coronavirus on their hands from touching their nose or mouth and then touches an object. COVID-19 seems to live on objects from a few hours up to three days.

We can reduce the spread of COVID-19 by objects by frequent hand-washing, not touching our face, frequent cleaning and disinfection, and use of automatic or touchless controls.

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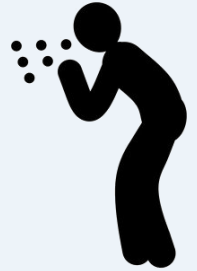
How do we get infected with COVID-19?

Many factors influence if you will get COVID-19 after being exposed to the virus.

Intensity of exposure

The intensity of exposure refers to how much virus you were exposed to. The more virus you were exposed to, the more likely you are to get sick.

- Was the sick person really contagious when you were exposed to them?
- Were they coughing and sneezing without a mask on versus having no symptoms with a mask on?
- Did you share personal items like a drink or a vape pen?
- Did you sit right next to them and have a face-to-face conversation or were you 6 feet away with your back to them?



Duration of exposure



The duration of exposure refers to how long were you exposed. For example, if you shared a classroom all day for several days with a person with COVID-19, you are at a greater risk, even if your seat was not within six feet of the infected person.

Personal health

Your personal health, like how good your immune system is, also plays a part in whether or not you will get infected, as does whether you were using all the COVID-19 risk reduction methods possible.



Age

Age also seems to play a part in risks for COVID-19. Children have a lower risk of catching COVID-19, and children have a lower risk of spreading COVID-19 to others, both to other children and adults.



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How is a close contact* determined at school?



Classmates

Students sitting or often within six feet of the contagious person either in class or on the bus (unless exposure only occurred for less than 15 minutes).



Lunch mates

Lunch companions of the student if they were sitting within six feet of the contagious individual. This is a higher risk time because face coverings cannot be worn.



Play mates

Playmates on the playground or in gym within six feet of the contagious individual, unless interactions are consistently kept very brief and no common items or locker room are shared.



Teammates

Sports teammates within six feet of the contagious individual, unless interactions are consistently kept very brief and no common items or locker room are shared.



Opposing teammates

Opposing teammates in a sporting event that shared time on the field or court with the contagious individual, unless it can be confirmed that there were no potential interactions within six feet of the contagious individual and there was no contact with shared items.



Other classmates

Any other students that had interactions with the contagious individual lasting more than 15 minutes in confined areas such as bathrooms or office where distancing of six feet is difficult.



Entire classrooms

If the contagious individual is a teacher and was not keeping six feet away from students while teaching and not following precautions, the entire class will need to quarantine.

*Close contact is defined as someone who was exposed to a person with COVID-19 by being within six feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes. Others may still be at high risk of exposure from the infected person depending on the circumstances of their exposure.



Others

Any other person outside of school that had similar exposure to a contagious individual is also considered a close contact.

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When to stay home & when students will be sent home

Students and staff should not go to school or any school activities or sports if they are having symptoms of COVID-19. If they start having symptoms while at school, they will be sent home. They may return to school based on the guidance of their diagnosis. Families and staff **MUST** notify the school if they test positive for COVID.

As long as there are COVID-19 cases in the community, there is no way to prevent all risk of COVID-19 spread in schools. The goal is to keep the risk as low as possible and keep school and school activities as safe as possible. If students do not go to school, they would still be at risk of contracting COVID-19 from their interactions in the community.

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever or 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
- * These are most common

Testing

The parent or guardian of the student will be instructed to call their healthcare provider or to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center. The adult can also visit www.mi.gov/coronavirustest to find the closest testing location to have the student tested for COVID-19. Staff with COVID symptoms will also be advised to follow up with their healthcare provider and be tested for COVID-19.

If the student or staff has symptoms and tests positive for COVID-19

The person must stay out of school until it has been at least 10 days from the first day they had symptoms, they have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine, and other symptoms have improved. There is no need to get a negative test result or a doctor's note to return to school if the individual meets these criteria.

If the student or staff has symptoms and no COVID-19 test was done

The person must keep out of school until it has been at least 10 days from the first day they had symptoms, they have not had a fever for at least 24 hours, and other symptoms have improved. The person may return to school sooner if their healthcare provider has diagnosed them with another cause for their symptoms and the doctor provides a note allowing them to return.

Student or staff has symptoms of COVID-19, but tests negative

The person must stay out of school until they have spent 24 hours without a fever and without fever reducing medicine and other symptoms have improved.

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