Student Symptom Decision Tree

Low-risk: general symptoms

- Fever (≥100.4°F)
- Congestion/runny nose
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea

High-risk: red flag symptoms

- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of taste/smell

Exposure to a COVID-19 positive person?

within 6 ft of a COVID + or clinically compatible person for >15 min in a 24 hr period, regardless of masking, and occurring in any location (indoor or outdoor)

**NO**

1. **1 low risk symptom**
   - Send home
   - Return to school after 24 hrs without fever and symptoms improving

2. **≥2 low risk symptoms OR 1 high risk symptom**
   - Send home
   - Consider an evaluation by health care provider

   Health care provider confirms alternative diagnosis for symptoms. A health care provider’s note must be on file. COVID-19 Test not needed.

**YES**

(within 6 feet for >15 min in a 24 hr period, regardless of masking)

1. **Household Exposure Without Symptoms** (defined as any exposure NOT in the school setting)
   - Quarantine at least 5 days after last exposure to positive household member.
   - Quarantine may end IF:
     - They do not have symptoms
     - Diagnostic test collected on, or after day 5 is negative
     - If unable to test or chooses not to test, they shall quarantine for 10 days after last exposure
     - Should continue wearing a well-fitting mask around others as required in schools. Those with valid exemptions and exceptions are able to return to school with their exempt status.

2. **Vaccine Status Up-to-Date**
   - Quarantine is not required IF:
     - No symptoms have developed since exposure
     - Should test on day 5, or later and immediately self-isolate, as described above, if they test positive
     - Should continue wearing a well-fitting mask around others as required in schools. Those with valid exemptions and exceptions are able to return to school with their exempt status.

   Return to school after 24 hrs without fever and symptoms improving

   No provider visit or test
   - Out of school for 10 days from symptom onset
   - Return to school after 24 hrs without fever and symptoms improving

   Positive COVID-19 Test
   - Positive student may discontinue isolation IF:
     - Isolate for at least 5 days from positive test
     - At least 5 days have passed since their symptom onset/positive test (if no symptoms) AND
     - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medication AND
     - Other symptoms have improved, except loss of taste/smell AND
     - A COVID-19 Test is negative on or after day 5 since onset of symptoms/positive test (if no symptoms)
     - If unable to do subsequent tests or choose not to test, out of school for 10 days from initial positive test
YES (within 6 feet for >15 min in a 24 hr period, regardless of masking)

**Exposure In School** (defined as on the bus, in the classroom, or during sports/extracurricular activities)

### Option 1: Individual Management

**Modified Quarantine Exemption**
- Student vaccine status is not up-to-date and both exposed student and COVID-19 positive person were wearing masks.
- Student may continue attending school in person IF:
  - The exposed student does not develop any symptoms; AND
  - The exposed student continues to wear an appropriately fitting mask; AND
  - The exposed student undergoes COVID-19 testing at least twice during the 5-day quarantine period; AND
  - The exposed student stays out of all extracurricular activities at school, including sports and activities in the community setting for the entire quarantine period.
  - The exposed student may participate in all instructional activities, except activities where a mask cannot be worn (e.g. some musical instruments)
  - If the exposed student is unable to test or chooses not to test, they shall remain in quarantine for 10 days after last exposure

**Option 2: Group Tracing Approach**

Schools will notify groups of potentially exposed students defined as:
- Potentially exposed students are those who spent over 15 minutes, in 24 hrs in the same indoor airspace with someone who has COVID-19
- All members of the group are notified regardless of vaccine status, previous COVID-19 disease status, or whether they were masked or not

Notification is to groups of students, rather than individual students, and will include:
- Exposure to COVID-19 with last known date of exposure
- Continue school attendance as long as they are free of symptoms
- Recommend testing 3-5 days after last exposure
- Continue wearing a well-fitting mask
- If unable to wear a mask, student must quarantine at home until a negative test result is obtained 3-5 days after most recent exposure

- Students may participate in activities wearing an appropriate mask
- If a mask cannot be worn, the student will refrain from that activity until negative COVID-19 test results are obtained 3-5 days after most recent exposure
- If student is part of a routine (weekly) test program, they may continue all activities as long as they remain without symptoms and test negative

**Definitions:**
- **Exposure** (for individual management approach): Student was within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period
- **Vaccine status up-to-date:** Persons 12 years and older who have completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccine and have either received a booster shot or are not yet recommended to receive a booster dose according to CDC guidance. For those <12 years of age, they are considered up-to-date if they have completed their primary series according to CDC guidance.
- **COVID-19 Test:** Antigen tests, nucleic acid amplification tests (PCR or NAA), or LAMP are acceptable, but **antigen testing is preferred to end isolation**. Home/over-the-counter tests are acceptable.
- **Resources for COVID Testing:**
  - https://health.choc.org/guide/covid-19/#test

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This care pathway was designed to assist school personnel and is not intended to replace the clinician’s judgment or establish a protocol for all patients with a particular condition. Diagnosis and treatment should be under the close supervision of a qualified health care provider, including school nurses. This guidance is based on current evidence and best data at the time of publication. Updates are provided to reflect changes in knowledge about the impact of the disease on children and adolescents (02.08.2022).

For more detailed guidance, see the California Department of Public Health: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/