

## School Nursing Care Protocol for the Management of Student Illness at School

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**Background:** In the absence of testing, it is difficult to know if children with symptoms have COVID-19 or another illness. It is possible for children with symptoms to infect others. As a result, children with symptoms should not be in school and they should be tested. Negative test results would allow them then to behave as they normally would (back to school or not depending illness severity/symptoms). However, national/regional/local testing capacity will likely not adequately support testing demands of ill children excluded from school. Absent testing, the 10-day/1-day rules take effect.

**Recommendations:** Akron Children's Hospital recommends that students, families, and school districts plan for illness-related school exclusion to occur in students through the course of the school year.

**General recommendation for student immediate medical isolation in preparation for school exclusion (Student dismissal from school within 60 minutes):**

- **Coronavirus/COVID 19 positive screen.** Positive screening questions include fever (100 degrees or higher), cough, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose. Any one of these symptoms alone or in combination puts student at greater risk for COVID-19 infection necessitating immediate medical isolation and student dismissal from school.
- **Coronavirus/COVID-19 test positive household contact necessitates immediate medical isolation and student dismissal from school** (unless otherwise directed by the Health Department).
- **Coronavirus/COVID-19 positive test.** A confirmed coronavirus/COVID-19 test positive student should not report to school, but immediate isolation and dismissal should occur if he/she reports.

**Return to school after illness-related school exclusion:**

- **Student with symptom-based/illness-based school exclusion requires healthcare provider return to school note.**

- For a student with alternative diagnosis for symptom-based school exclusion (i.e. allergies), health care provider clearance is required and should include clinical evaluation but does not require SARS-CoV-2 testing.
- For a student with clinical COVID-19 who is not tested, the student requires at least 1 day (24 hours) fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared unless you have healthcare provider clearance.
- **For those students who receive SARS-CoV-2 testing**
  - If SARS-CoV-2 testing (PCR test) is negative, the student could return to school.
  - If SARS-CoV-2 testing (PCR test) is positive, see “Student who tests positive for Coronavirus/COVID-19” below.
- **Student with confirmed COVID positive household contact.** The student should return to school after provider clearance and generally after 24 days after household contact tested positive (14 days after the household contact has achieved 10 days from symptom onset and 1-day fever and symptom free, as outlined above)
- **Student who tests positive for Coronavirus/Covid-19, must meet all 3 criteria:**
  1. At least 1 days (24 hours) fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
  2. Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  3. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared unless you have healthcare provider clearance.