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What is COVID-19?

There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. **COVID-19** is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.

How does the virus spread?

It's thought to spread mainly from person to person, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or sings. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. A person is at higher risk of contracting the disease more when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). We also know that it can spread through surfaces touched that are contaminated by the virus although not as common as person-person infection. When you touch a contaminated surface then touch your face, particularly your nose or mouth you are exposing your body to the virus. Research in laboratory controlled environments found that it can survive up to 72 hrs on plastic and stainless steel. No survivable virus was detected after 24 hrs on cardboard. Animal- person are still being studied.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have 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

Are symptoms different in children and adults?

No. The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults

I've heard of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), what is it and who is at risk?

This is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. However, we know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes COVID-19 or had been around someone with COVID-19. MIS-C can be serious,

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even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care.

Contact your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic right away if your child is showing symptoms of MIS-C.

- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Neck pain
- Rash
- Bloodshot eyes
- Feeling extra tired

Be aware that not all children will have all the same symptoms.

How can I protect my child and my family?

Teach your child and family members the following:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, like tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles).
- Encourage all family members to wear a face covering outside of the home.

Will my child have to wear a face covering? Why?

CDC recommends that everyone 2 years and older wear a cloth face covering that covers their nose and mouth in public settings when around people not living in your household, particularly where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on babies or children younger than 2 because of the danger of suffocation. Children younger than 2 years of age are listed as an exception as well as anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance. Also our Special Education population will be taken into consideration on whether or not they must wear face coverings.

Face coverings have been proven to be effective. For example: two hair stylists in Missouri developed respiratory symptoms and were subsequently diagnosed with COVID-19, but continued to work for 8 days (stylist A) and 5 days (stylist B) after developing symptoms

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- Stylists worked for a combined 17 days while considered infectious; Exposed 139 clients
- Very high compliance with face mask use by stylists and clients
- Zero people developed COVID-19 (tested about 48% of exposed clients)

When will my child be required to wear a mask?

Students and staff will be required to wear a face covering in school at all times, but will be provided breaks from use when appropriate as to be determined.

What type of face covering can my child wear to protect against the spread of COVID-19?

It is recommended to keep a supply of 5 reusable cloth face masks for each student for each school day and to regularly wash them at home.

Acceptable face coverings include:

- Bandana
- Neck gaiter
- Homemade face covering
- Scarf
- Tightly woven fabric, such as cotton t-shirts and some types of towels
- Surgical mask purchased from the store please do not purchase N95 masks as we save those for the medical community

Is a face shield an acceptable face covering?

No. A face shield is used as an added layer of protection not as a single protective unit as it only protects the eyes. All coughs and sneezes will exit the face shield through the bottom and be dispersed into the air.

Who is considered "high risk?"

People with underlying medical conditions or have compromised immunities such as COPD, serious heart conditions, cancer, kidney disease and Type 2 Diabetes to name a few. Please refer to the CDC website for more info.

Why do I have to check my child's temperature before going to school if school officials are going to check it anyway?

Screening at home will prevent any sick children from being sent to school therefore reducing everyone's exposure to potential virus and/bacterial infections.

At what temperature should I keep my child home?

Please keep your child home if his/her temperature is >100.4 F without the use of medications. If your child's temperature is >100.0 F and they are symptomatic or look ill please keep them home as their temperature could increase as the day goes on. If

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you're still unsure please feel free to reach out to your child's school nurse for more guidance.

Which thermometer should I use?

We recommend using a thermometer that you are comfortable using preferably a no touch model as that is what your school nurse will be taking temperatures with. If you do not have a thermometer please let the school know so that we can assist you with getting one. Furthermore other types of thermometers are fine to use as long as you follow the manufacturer's directions on proper use.

If a student in my child's class/school has a confirmed case of COVID-19 will we be notified?

If a student has tested positive for COVID-19 the school will notify the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and they will conduct contact tracing as determined by need.

What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is used by health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease (cases) and their contacts (people who may have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. For COVID-19, this includes asking cases to isolate and contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily.

Should I or my child be tested for COVID-19?

Not everyone needs to be tested for COVID-19.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and want to get tested, call your healthcare provider first. Most people will have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care and may not need to be tested.

What should I do if I or someone in my house gets sick?

Stay home and monitor yourself and/or the person in your household who is sick. Increase hydration and rest. Do not return to school or work until fever free without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin. If you're not sure about what to do please contact your local health provider for more information.

What physical distancing measures will be used to protect my child at school?

The benefit of being in the classroom outweighs the risk of contracting COVID-19 per the literature. Under current guidelines students and staff members will be kept at a distance of at least 3 feet apart when possible as this is deemed appropriate from the American Academy of Pediatrics provided students are wearing masks, facing forward and desks are placed in rows when possible. At the elementary level some desks will be equipped with desk providers to further decrease the risk.

Can my child hang out with their friends?

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The key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 is to practice social distancing. While school is out, children should not have in-person playdates with children from other households. If children are playing outside their own homes, it is essential that they remain 6 feet from anyone who is not in their own household. Some children with certain underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Make sure children practice washing their hands often with soap and water. Remember, if children meet outside of school in groups, it can put everyone at risk.

Will my child still have access to the school nurse for typical health visits such as headaches, stomach upset or need for daily medication etc?

Yes your school nurse will still be available for any and all students who are in need during the school day and will operate as it has in the past with the exception of suspected COVID-19 cases.

What cleaning measures will the school take to protect my child?

The school is following CDC and NH DHHS guidelines for sanitation and disinfection of areas routinely. We are equipped with sanitation spraying devices as well as approved cleaning products that will be utilized by school custodians, teachers and school nurses daily. We have increased the number of hand sanitizer dispensers in high traffic areas.

What cleaning products are most effective against COVID-19?

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are dirty, clean them using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. For specific names of products please visit

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

Should my child use soap or hand sanitizer to protect against COVID-19?

Washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds is the single most important thing you can do to protect yourself from germs. When soap and water are not easily accessible, hand sanitizer with 60% or more alcohol content is recommended.

Should contact lenses users take special precautions against COVID-19?

Currently there is no evidence to suggest contact lens wearers are more at risk for acquiring COVID-19 than eyeglass wearers.

Will my child be isolated if they are sick at school? Where?

Yes, but only children who have 2 or more COVID-19 symptoms will be placed into a room designated for isolation. The location and set up of the isolation room will be different in all of our school buildings however your child will be located close to the

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nurse and continually monitored. They will have access to a bathroom at all times and will be kept comfortable until you can arrange for pick up. To decrease the risk of potentially contracting and exposing others to Covid-19, we ask that parents are equipped with a phone and/or an alternative contact that can pick up your child as soon as possible. The isolation rooms are not set up to keep your child for long periods of time.

If my child is sent home sick will they be required to be tested for COVID-19?

No not necessarily. If your child is exhibiting 2 or more symptoms of COVID-19, the school nurse will refer you to your local health provider to determine the need for testing.

Can someone test negative then later positive for COVID-19?

Yes, it is possible. You may test negative if the sample was collected early in your infection and test positive later during this illness. You could also be exposed to COVID-19 after the test and get infected then. Even if you test negative, you still should take steps to protect yourself and others as outlined. Contact your health provider for more information

How long will my child be required to stay home if they are sick?/ When can my child return to school?

If symptomatic and confirmed with COVID-19 they will be excluded from school:

1. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, **AND**
2. At least 24 hours have passed since last fever (off fever-reducing meds), **AND**
3. Symptoms have improved

If they are ill due to any other illness please refer to the student/parent manual or SAU3 website for acceptable exclusion from school for illness. Generally speaking if taking antibiotics for an infection such as pink eye or strep throat the child must have received at least 4 doses or have taken the antibiotic for 24 hours before being allowed back to school. The child must also be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications prior to returning to school.

Is it possible to have the flu and COVID-19 at the same time?

Yes. It is possible to test positive for flu (as well as other respiratory infections) and COVID-19 at the same time.

What if my child has been exposed to COVID-19, will they be required to stay home?

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If your child has been exposed to a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 with close contact less than 6 feet and was not wearing a face covering then we would recommend contacting your local health care provider for assistance before they come to school. If your child was wearing a face covering and so was the person positive with COVID-19 then we recommended monitoring for signs and symptoms of the disease and contacting your local health care provider for their recommendation as to how to proceed before they come to school.

How do I prepare my child in case of a COVID-19 outbreak in our community?

Outbreaks can be stressful for adults and children. When you talk with your child, try to stay calm, and reassure them that they are safe. Talk to your child about COVID-19 and answer questions simply to help them better understand and cope with the stress.

Are people with disabilities at higher risk for getting COVID-19?

Most people with disabilities are not inherently at higher risk for becoming infected with or having severe illness from COVID-19. Some people with physical limitations or other disabilities might be at a higher risk of infection because of their underlying medical condition. Talk with your health care provider if you have additional questions.

How can my family cope with the added stress?

Supporting children with special healthcare needs can put additional demands and stress on families, especially during emergency situations. You have likely found ways to manage the stress and challenges unique to your family's situation. It is important to continue your family's coping methods, including reaching out to other family members, friends, support groups, and organizations that have been helpful in the past. If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others:

- Call 911
- Visit the Disaster Distress Helpline at [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)
- or call 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline at [thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org)
- or call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

When should I seek emergency care?

Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

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Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

All information has been collected and cited from the CDC website and from NH state Epidemiologist, Dr. Benjamin Chan.

For more information please refer to

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Children>

Or <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov>