

Needham Public Schools Illness Guidelines 2021-2022

(updated February 8, 2022)

The health and safety of all students and staff are a priority of Needham Public Schools. In an effort to maximize the health of our community, Needham Public Schools, in collaboration with the Needham Public Health Department, and the School Physician have established the following illness guidelines. These guidelines pertain to COVID-19 as well as other illnesses.

**Please note, these guidelines are subject to change based on updated data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and/or the Needham Public Health Department.

For quick reference, we are providing a link for steps to take for an individual who has tested positive for COVID and must isolate and for an individual who has been identified as a close contact and must quarantine. Although changes to protocols are expected as new guidance continues to be released by DESE and DPH, the district has prepared infographics to guide our staff and families: [District's COVID protocols for Isolation and Quarantine](#)

Families must perform a symptoms check on *each* of their students, each day before leaving for school and complete an attestation that is sent via daily text/email. If a student experiences any symptoms of COVID-19, or any other illnesses listed below, please keep them home and follow the guidelines below.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever over 100°F and/or chills
- Difficulty breathing and/or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea (*in combination with other symptoms*)

- Fatigue (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Headache (*in combination with other symptoms*)

DESE UPDATE: While previous guidance provided a differentiated symptoms list for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, the new symptoms list above applies to all individuals, regardless of vaccination status.

Needham Public Schools accepts At-Home antigen COVID Tests as well as lab antigen and PCR/molecular/NAAT tests.

ILLNESS	ACTION	EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL	RETURN TO SCHOOL
Close contact to someone with COVID 19	Quarantine per public health guidelines. COVID-19 test (home or lab) day 5 Test site information Email school nurse.	Quarantine according to the Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines If your child develops ANY symptom of COVID during (<i>congestion, runny nose, headache, sore throat, fever, chills, cough, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell</i>) he 10 days after exposure, keep them home, get them a PCR/molecular/NAAT and email your school nurse.	After cleared by: - School Nurse

<p>Exposure notification, not identified as a close contact</p>	<p>Monitor your child closely for symptoms for 14 days following the exposure</p>	<p>If your child develops ANY symptom of COVID during the 14 days after exposure, keep them home, get them a PCR/molecular/NAAT and email your school nurse.</p>	<p>Continue with school and activities as long as they remain without symptom</p>
<p>Diagnosis of COVID-19</p>	<p>Isolate at home AND call and report the positive result at COVID Protocol Updates for Students/Families</p> <p>If the positive is a home test, a laboratory test is recommended Test site information</p>	<p>Isolate according to the Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines</p>	<p>Cleared by: - School Nurse</p>

<p>Symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 and not a close contact</p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>If symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptom develops, take another COVID test</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>Depends on the results of the test.</p> <p>- If negative COVID-19 test, may return to school after 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medications, and have improvement of symptoms. If receives an alternative diagnosis from a medical provider, may return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (i.e., flu, strep throat, etc.) and be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and have improvement of symptoms.</p> <p>- If no testing done or documentation of alternative diagnosis, must stay home for 10 days of isolation, be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication and have improvement of symptoms.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- Email school nurse your negative test result and return to school once symptoms improve</p>
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<p>Cold symptoms, i.e., nasal discharge/sneeze (with another symptom), headache (with another symptom), fatigue (with another symptom) in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students</p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>If symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptom develops, take another COVID test</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>- If negative COVID-19 test, must be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours, must have improvement of cough, must be able to self-contain nasal secretions and practice cough hygiene.</p> <p>- If COVID-19 positive, Isolate according to the Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines</p> <p><i>- If not tested for COVID-19, must stay home for 6 days of isolation until resolution of symptoms, be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and have improvement of symptoms.</i></p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse and/or healthcare provider</p>
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<p>Fever 100 or above, chills, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, new loss of taste/smell, muscle or body aches, or cough <i>for all students including fully vaccinated</i></p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>If symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptom develops, take another COVID test</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>- If negative COVID-19 test, must be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours, must have improvement of cough, must be able to self-contain nasal secretions and practice cough hygiene.</p> <p>- If COVID-19 positive, Isolate according to the Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines</p> <p><i>- If not tested for COVID-19, must stay home for 6 days of isolation until resolution of symptoms, be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and have improvement of symptoms.</i></p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse and/or healthcare provider / Public Health Department (if positive test)</p>
<p>Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)</p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider for evaluation.</p> <p>If both eyes, please get a COVID Test as eye itching or drainage has been seen with Omicron</p>	<p>24 hours after ophthalmic antibiotic and there is no more purulent (pus) eye discharge.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse</p>

	Call or email the school nurse		
Cough due to pre-existing condition as documented by healthcare provider	<p>If cough worsens or changes from student's typical chronic presentation, stay home, call healthcare provider for evaluation.</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse.</p>	May return to school 24 hours if no fever without fever reducing medications, and if has documentation from a healthcare provider that there is an alternative pre-existing diagnosis (e.g., asthma, seasonal allergies, etc.)	
Ear infection	<p>Stay home and call healthcare provider for evaluation.</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse.</p>	24 hours fever free without fever reducing medication.	Cleared by: - School Nurse

<p>Fever over 100 degrees with no other symptoms</p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>If symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptom develops, take another COVID test</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse.</p>	<p>-May return to school if no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medication</p> <p>OR</p> <p>-May return to school if no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medication and documentation from a healthcare provider that there is an alternative diagnosis excluding a viral syndrome</p> <p>OR</p> <p>-If there is no alternative diagnosis and no COVID-19 test was done, must stay home for 6 days isolation and be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse and/or healthcare provider</p>
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<p>Headache <i>in combination with other symptoms</i> in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students</p>	<p>Stay home, call healthcare provider</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab)</p> <p>If symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptom develops, take another COVID test</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse.</p>	<p>- If positive COVID-19 test, will follow public health guidelines for isolation.</p> <p>- May return to school if negative or with documentation of alternative diagnosis from a healthcare provider.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse</p>
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<p>Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea with 1 other symptom in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students</p>	<p>Stay home and call healthcare provider for evaluation.</p> <p>Take a COVID test (home or lab) and remain home until you have negative results.</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>- If negative COVID test, may return to school after 24 hours without diarrhea, vomiting or fever without fever reducing medication, AND must be able to tolerate a typical diet for 24 hours.</p> <p>- If no testing done, must stay home for 6 days of isolation.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse</p>
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<p>Vomiting and/or diarrhea in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students with no other symptoms</p>	<p>Stay home until 24 hours from vomiting or diarrhea per school protocol. If another symptom develops or symptoms worsen, get COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>May return to school after 24 hours without vomiting or fever off of fever reducing medication and must be able to tolerate a typical diet for 24 hours.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse</p>
<p>Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea in vaccinated students</p>	<p>COVID-19 test (home or lab) is not required, but is encouraged if symptoms continue or worsen.</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>May return to school after 24 hours without vomiting or fever off of fever reducing medication, and must be able to tolerate a typical diet for 24 hours.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse and/or healthcare provider</p>
<p>Pain</p>	<p>Stay home if your student requires narcotic medication for pain control, notify the school nurse.</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>Until off narcotic medication and cleared by healthcare provider.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <p>- School Nurse and - Healthcare provider</p>

Rash	Stay home and call healthcare provider for evaluation. Call or email the school nurse	Stay home until you have documentation by healthcare provider with diagnosis and improvement of rash.	Cleared by: - School Nurse and - Healthcare provider
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<p>Sore Throat in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students</p>	<p>-COVID-19 test (home or lab) is not required over DESE, but is encouraged. Sore throat has been an increasing symptom of COVID</p> <p>-Testing is required if another symptom develops.</p> <p>Test site information</p> <p>Consider a visit to the healthcare provider for a strep test</p> <p>Call or email the school nurse</p>	<p>- If COVID-19 test negative, may return after 24 hours if fever free off all fever reducing medications and have improvement of symptoms.</p> <p>- If COVID-19 positive, Isolate according to the Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines</p>	<p>-If sore throat is the only symptom and the student feels well enough to participate in school, they can return to school.</p> <p>If the sore throat worsens or another symptom develops, please get another COVID test and speak with their medical provider</p>
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<p>Other illness scenario not listed above</p>	<p>Stay home and call healthcare provider for evaluation and call school nurse.</p>	<p>When cleared by the school nurse and healthcare provider.</p>	<p>Cleared by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Healthcare providerand- School Nurse
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