

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## FOR PARENTS OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS IN THE OUTAOUAIS

### 1. How do I recognize COVID-19 symptoms in my child?

Your child **cannot** go to school if he/she has one of the following symptoms:



**Fever** (38.1°C or higher)



Loss of the sense of taste or smell

#### Respiratory symptoms :



- Cough (new or worse)
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose

#### Gastrointestinal symptoms :



- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach aches

#### General symptoms :



- Major fatigue
- Significant loss of appetite
- General muscle pain

**Wait 24 hours** and monitor for worsening or additional symptoms.



This period of observation is necessary to monitor for additional or worsening symptoms and therefore to determine whether you should have your child tested for COVID-19.

**If your child still shows one or several of these symptoms after 24 hours**, consult the [COVID-19 Symptom Self Assessment Tool](#) on the official government website and follow the directions.

**Example:** If your child has a runny nose on Monday morning, keep him at home for the day. If his nose is still runny on Tuesday morning, with no other symptoms, consult the Symptom Self-Assessment Tool. The tool will let you know whether your child can return to school.

## 2. What happens if someone at my child's school receives a positive COVID-19 result?

- That person will be contacted by public health;
- That person's contacts will be promptly assessed by public health;
- There are **three possible situations** for your child:

**Situation 1: Your child is identified as a moderate or high-risk contact.** For example, if there is a COVID-19 case in the same group/class as your child.

- The parents of students who have had moderate or high-risk contact with the person with COVID-19 receive a **public health letter from the school** indicating that their child has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. For example, students in the same group/class as the positive case.
- Parents will then be **contacted by phone by the investigation team** of the Public Health Branch. A delay of at least 24 hours is to be expected.
- Upon receiving the letter, it is important to **keep your child at home** and monitor his/her symptoms. Public Health will tell you what the required isolation period is.

**Situation 2: Your child is identified as a low-risk contact.** For example, a COVID-19 case of a teacher of the group/class, however the distancing of 2m was maintained with all students at all times.

- The students who have had low-risk contact with the person who has COVID-19 will be able to keep attending the school. Parents will receive a **Public Health letter from the school** with some instructions to follow.
- Parents will be asked to monitor for any symptoms for a period of 14 days.

**Situation 3: Your child is not at risk.** For example, a case in a person who did not attend school during the period of contagion.

- Parents will receive a letter from the school informing them that their child was not exposed to the infectious case;
- Staff and students will be able to continue to attend school.

## 3. What is the difference between a case in a classroom and an outbreak in school?

- A single case in a classroom is not an outbreak;
- An outbreak is defined as: at least 2 confirmed cases within 14 days that cannot be explained by a link outside the school setting (e.g. a sibling);
- In the event of an outbreak, all involved parents will receive instructions from Public Health.



All personal information received by Public Health **is confidential**. It cannot be shared with the public or a third party without prior consent. Only the information deemed necessary to protect your health and safety can be shared with you. Therefore, since the name or grade of the positive case in your school does not change the necessary actions to take if exposed, this information will not be shared.

#### 4. What will happen while my child is waiting for his/her COVID-19 test result?

Situations	Stay home	Return to school
A. Your child was tested because of symptoms resembling COVID-19	X Wait for the results at home	
B. Your child was tested following the recommendation of Public Health because he/she was identified as a <b>moderate/high risk contact</b>	X Stay isolated for the duration of the 14 day isolation period, <b>even if the test result is negative</b>	
C. Your child was tested after coming back from a vacation outside of Canada	X Stay isolated for the duration of the 14 day isolation period, <b>even if the test result is negative</b>	
D. Your child was tested <b>but does not have</b> symptoms and <b>hasn't</b> been identified by Public Health as a <b>moderate/high risk contact</b>		X Return to school while waiting for the test results

**Important:** If you decide **not to get your child tested** for COVID-19, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until they are completely gone. During this time, your child must not go to school, including school daycare.

## 5. What will happen if my child receives a positive COVID-19 test result?

- You will be contacted by Public Health in order to identify his/her contacts who are considered at risk.
- You will be informed of the main recommendations to follow:
  - Isolate your child at home until he/she is no longer considered contagious;
  - Limit your child's contact with the people living in the same household;
  - Monitor your child's symptoms.
- Public Health will inform you of the expected end date of the isolation. Plan for at least 10 days.

**Important:** during isolation at home, your child cannot go to the park, see friends, go to the store, etc.

## 6. What will happen if my child receives a negative COVID-19 test result?



- Your child will be able to return to school when both of the following conditions are met:
  - 48 hours with no fever (without taking medication ex: Tylenol<sup>®</sup>, Tempra<sup>®</sup>, Motrin<sup>®</sup>, etc.);
  - AND
  - 24 hours after a significant improvement in the other symptoms.



- If your child was tested following the recommendation of Public Health because he/she was identified as a moderate/high risk contact : he/she must stay isolated for the duration of the 14 day isolation period, even if the test result is negative;
- If your child was tested after coming back from a vacation outside of Canada : he/she must stay isolated for the duration of the 14 day isolation period, even if the test result is negative;

## 7. My son has symptoms, but his sister has no symptoms. Can she go to school?

- If your daughter has no symptoms and has not been identified as a moderate/high risk contact of a positive case, she can go to school.
- As a parent, if you do not have symptoms, you can continue your daily activities (e.g. work).

**8. If a member of the household is waiting for a COVID-19 test result, can the other people in the household continue their daily activities (e.g. going to work, going to school)?**

- If the other members of the household do not have symptoms and have not been identified as a moderate/high risk contact of a positive case, they can go to school or work.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

We encourage you to read the following back-to-school documents.

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/education/back-to-school-plan-fall-covid-19/>  
[COVID-19 procedure to follow in educational institutions](#)  
[The abcs of a safe start to the year in preschool and elementary school](#)  
[The abcs of a safe start to the year in secondary school](#)

*The answers are based on information that was available at the time these recommendations were written. Since the situation and knowledge involving the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) changes quickly, the recommendations in this document are subject to change.*