



Frequently Asked Questions

UPDATE: On August 1, 2020 an Executive Order issued by Governor Evers will require the use of masks including in schools.

1. Question: What are the important facts that students, parents, and staff members should know about the COVID-19 disease? (how transmitted, symptoms, asymptomatic, incubation period, etc.)

Answer: COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that occurs due to exposure to the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person contact through respiratory droplets (talking, coughing, laughing). COVID-19 spreads easily from person to person and there is “community spread” of the virus throughout Waukesha County. Elderly individuals and those with underlying health conditions are at a higher risk of severe symptoms from respiratory illness.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may vary but often include the following which may appear 2-14 days after exposure:

- 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

Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html#> to utilize the CDC Symptom Checker.

It is important to note that individuals who remain asymptomatic (don’t seem sick) may spread the virus to others.

2. Question: Have any children contracted COVID-19?

Answer: As of July 14th, 2020, in Waukesha County, 111 children and adolescents (under age 18) have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date.; some children will develop multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) due to COVID-19 illness. Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/mis-c.html> to learn more about MIS-C.

3. Question: What criteria is used to determine who is a close contact of a person who has COVID-19? If a student is wearing a mask, will he/she still be considered a close contact?

Answer: Someone is a “close contact” if any of the following situations happened while they spent time with a person with COVID-19 (even if they didn’t have symptoms):

- Had direct physical contact with the person (e.g.; hug, kiss, handshake).
- Were within 6 feet of the person for more than 15 minutes (can be cumulative).
- Had contact with the person’s respiratory secretions (e.g.; coughed/sneezed on, contact with a dirty tissue, sharing a drinking glass, food, or towels or other personal items).
- Stayed overnight for at least one night in a household with the person

The use of a mask or cloth face covering by an infectious individual in a community, non-healthcare setting most likely reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19, but it is unknown to what degree. In a community setting, risk assessment and quarantine guidance for a contact is not affected by the case-patient or contact wearing a mask or cloth face covering.

4. Question: If my child is identified as a close contact to someone with COVID-19, must he/she be quarantined?

Answer: If your child has been identified as a “close contact” to a known case of COVID-19 you will be contacted by Public Health to notify you of their exposure. Public Health will provide information and details on the need to stay quarantined for 14 days since the date of their last exposure and to monitor for symptoms.

5. Question: How effective is testing for COVID-19? If my child is considered a close contact to a person who has contracted the disease, will a negative result of a COVID-19 test allow my child to go back to school immediately?

Answer: If an individual tests negative for COVID-19, they probably were not infectious at the time their sample was collected. However, that does not mean that person will not get sick. The test result only means they did not have detectable COVID-19 at the time of testing. Individuals may test negative if the sample was collected too early in the infection and could test positive later during the illness. You could also be exposed to COVID-19 after the test and get infected then. This means they could still spread the virus. If you develop symptoms later, you may need another test to determine if you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

For people that are quarantined, a negative test does not mean that quarantine can end early. Close contacts are quarantined for 14 days because COVID-19 could develop at any time during that 14-day period. If someone tests negative on day 4 of quarantine, that is only one point in time, and does not rule out testing positive during the rest of the 14-day period. If symptoms develop during quarantine, testing should occur.

6. Question: What is multisystem inflammatory syndrome? How do children contract this disease?

Answer: Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) 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, even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care. In order to stay informed about this condition, you can find the CDC’s guide on MIS-C [here](#), including symptoms, when to seek care, and how doctors may treat a child with MIS-C.

7. Question: Why is my child’s school recommending I use health screening questions on a daily basis? Wouldn’t it be better if the school just took the temperature of everyone entering the school?

Answer: Parents know their child best and checking your child for symptoms at home is the best way to prevent them from arriving to school with illness. As symptoms of an illness can develop at any time, it is important to evaluate your child daily, prior to going to school.

While fever is a common symptom of COVID-19 only a portion of those infected with COVID-19 will experience a fever; therefore, screening temperatures at the door will not account for those infected but not exhibiting a fever.

8. Question: I've heard conflicting information-- Are facial coverings effective or not in keeping people safe from COVID-19?

Answer: Yes, face coverings, combined with other preventive measures, such as frequent hand-washing and social distancing, help slow the spread of the virus. Cloth face coverings can help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others. Wearing a cloth face covering will help protect people around you, including those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and workers who frequently come into close contact with other people (e.g., in stores and restaurants). Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings.

Early in the pandemic, experts didn't yet know the extent to which people with COVID-19 could spread the virus before symptoms appeared. Nor was it known that some people have COVID-19 but don't have any symptoms. Both groups can unknowingly spread the virus to others.

These discoveries led the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to update its guidance to recommend widespread use of simple cloth face coverings to help prevent transmission of the virus by people who have COVID-19 but don't know it. As of August 1, 2020, the State of Wisconsin issued an Emergency Order mandating the use face-coverings for individuals over the age of 5. [You can read the order in its entirety here.](#)

9. Question: If I want my child to wear a mask but other children in the classroom won't keep their mask on, what rights do I have? Can I demand all children in a room keep their masks on?

Answer: As of August 1, 2020, the State of Wisconsin has issued an Emergency Order mandating the use of face-coverings for individuals over the age of 5. Waukesha County School Districts will develop policies and plans that best serve their students and staff. Contact your district administrator with questions.

10. Question: Why are we not recommending the use of N95 masks?

Answer: Per CDC guidance, it is recommended that the general public wear cloth face coverings, not surgical masks or N-95 respirators.

- Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.
- Per CDC, People with chronic respiratory, cardiac, or other medical conditions that make breathing difficult should check with their health care provider before using an N95 respirator because the N95 respirator can make it more difficult for the wearer to breathe.
- The supply of N95 respirators remains low and nationwide shortages would occur if used by the general public
- If N95's are mandated by the employer, OSHA requires that all employees are trained and have the respirator personally fit test. This process would be extremely difficult to manage for District wide for all school employees
- N95 respirators are not designed for children or people with facial hair. Because a proper fit cannot be achieved on children and people with facial hair, the N95 respirator may not provide full protection
- N95 respirators require special care and cleaning if they are to be reused and remain effective. Improper cleaning or use could increase chance of transmission.
- Cloth face coverings can simply be washed and reused.