COVID-19 in Pediatric Patients (Pre-K – Grade 12)
Triage, Evaluation, Testing and Return to School*

*This algorithm was developed in the setting of Vermont’s low prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 Virus. This is a changing environment, and as we gain new knowledge about this virus, expect adaptations. The algorithm does NOT apply to children diagnosed with COVID-19 by PCR within the past three months. Please consult CDC protocols in those settings. As pediatric patients become eligible for vaccination, the algorithm will be updated.

Exposure to known COVID-19 patient or out of state travel?  

Yes

Any of following symptoms? Fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, lack of smell/taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, headache

Yes

Consult medical home to arrange COVID PCR test

Negative Test

Exposure in home?

Yes

Return to school when: 
10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and ≥ 24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

No

Return to school when: 
Finished 14-day quarantine, which begins after person with latest onset of symptoms clears infection (10 days from onset, fever resolved ≥ 24 hr, symptom resolution) or negative PCR test at day 7 of quarantine.

Positive Test

Return to school when: 
14-day quarantine, which begins after person with latest onset of symptoms clears infection (10 days from onset, fever resolved ≥ 24 hr, symptom resolution) or negative PCR test at day 7 of quarantine.

No

Exposure in home?

Yes

Option 1:
Isolate away from infected person in household / leave household and then Option A or B

Option A: 14-day quarantine

Option B: COVID PCR test on day 7 if asymptomatic

No

Option 2:
Remain in household

Return to school when: 
 Finished 14-day quarantine, which begins after person with latest onset of symptoms clears infection (10 days from onset, fever resolved ≥ 24 hr, symptom resolution) or negative PCR test at day 7 of quarantine.

Positive Test

Return to school when: 
10 days after test, if still asymptomatic

Negative Test
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Exposure to known COVID-19 patient or out of state travel?¹

Yes: see page 1

No

Any of following symptoms? Fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, lack of smell/taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle aches, headache

Yes

• Fever (≥100.4°F) and cough and/or runny nose
• Cough or SOB without fever
• Loss of taste or smell without fever

Consult medical home to arrange COVID PCR test

Negative Test

Return to school when:
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

Positive Test

Return to school when:
≥10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

Negative Test

Return to school when:
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms have improved²

No test but alternative diagnosis made³

Return to school when:
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

Return to school when:
≥10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

No test and no alternative diagnosis⁵

Return to school, follow current school policies for any other symptoms (i.e. rash, ear pain, joint pain)²

Return to school when:
≥24 hours after symptom improvement or resolution⁴

Family encouraged to call medical home to determine need for COVID PCR test

Return to school when:
≥10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
≥24 hours afebrile without the use of antipyretics and symptoms improved

¹Exposure/travel: had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes over 24 hour period) with a person with confirmed COVID-19; or traveled out of state.
There are also potential exposures (gatherings, events) where a patient should be encourage to get a test as per VDH recommendations.
²Consult usual infectious disease protocols (e.g. Red Book or Caring for Our Children)
³Rash alone, including purple toes, is not currently a CDC listed symptom of acute COVID-19 infection
⁴Parent/caregivers may consult medical home for persistent symptoms
⁵Routine testing of otherwise healthy outpatients for influenza is strongly discouraged this season, in order to preserve testing capacity for SARS-CoV-2. For additional information, please refer to current health department health alerts (HAN) or guidelines for influenza testing.