

COVID Q&A

When I think of COVID, I think of old people on respirators in the ICU. What are the symptoms of COVID in children?

- Symptoms may include runny nose, congestion, cough, sore throat, fever, headache, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, muscle/body aches, new loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing.

My child's school sent her home because she has a runny nose. This is so frustrating. Are schools being unnecessarily cautious?

- In short, no.
- Symptoms of COVID can include any of the above OR NO symptoms are all! For this reason, a child who has ANY symptom of COVID should be tested.

My child is sick and needs a COVID test before he can return to school. Should my child be seen by a doctor or is getting a COVID test sufficient?

- COVID is very difficult to distinguish from the common cold, the flu, Strep throat, an ear infection, or a stomach bug.
- As such, we recommend that, when possible, your child come in for a physical exam AND a COVID test.

Does your practice offer COVID testing?

- Yes, we have PCR (molecular) testing available for symptomatic patients only.
- We do not offer screening tests for travel, sports clearance, returning home from college to see family, etc.

How long does it take to get results back from WPA/NAPA?

- Our lab sends COVID tests to Quest Diagnostics, a national lab that processes samples for many hospitals and outpatient clinics.
- Result time varies widely, but on average, our turnaround time is 4-8 days. Recently, as the cases of COVID in the community have increased and there has been a higher demand for testing, we have experienced an 8 day turnaround.



My kid can't sit around for 8 days waiting for a test. Where can I go that is faster?

- The available testing sites and turnaround time for results seems to change quickly, but our patients have had success with some of the resources listed below:
 - CIC Health in Cambridge <https://www.cic-health.com/individuals>
 - You can search for additional sites here:
<https://memamaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=eba3f0395451430b9f631cb095febf13>
 - Lawrence General Hospital
<https://www.lawrencegeneral.org/about-us/covid-19-testing>

My friend's kids got rapid PCR tests at your office. Why is this not available to my child?

- The labs at WPA and NAPA both have the machines to run rapid PCR tests, however, testing supplies are scarce. We rarely have these rapid tests in stock, but they are our first line of testing whenever we do have them!

My daughter has a sore throat and school says she cannot return without a doctor's note. Does your practice write these notes?

- If your child has any symptom of COVID (even "just a sore throat"), he/she should have a COVID test.
- We will provide a note for school once your child has a negative COVID test if the test was performed at our office.
- We do not write notes for tests obtained elsewhere.

I just learned that my daughter's friend tested positive for COVID. How do I figure out if my daughter was actually exposed?

- Your child was exposed if she was within 6 feet of the infected person for a cumulative period of 15 minutes, regardless of whether either or both people were wearing a mask.

My child has been tested for COVID. What does this mean for my other children? My job?

- Your household should quarantine until his/her tests results are back.
- If there is a household member who is an essential employee, we recommend that you contact that person's job to let them know that someone in your household has been tested for COVID and follow the employer's guidelines.

My son was exposed to a person who tested positive for COVID and I have been told that he needs to quarantine for 14 days. What does that mean?

- The CDC recommends quarantining for 14 days after exposure to an infected person. Quarantine means staying in your house and going NOWHERE for 14 days. NOWHERE means no school, no hockey practice, no outdoor gatherings with friends, no running into the store quickly to grab one thing.
- The MA Department of Public Health is now advising that asymptomatic individuals who have been exposed to COVID may end quarantine after 10 days IF they have remained asymptomatic during the entire 10 days AND have a negative COVID PCR test that has been performed on day 8 of quarantine or later. Individuals coming out of quarantine at this time must monitor themselves for symptoms for a full 14 days after exposure. If symptoms develop during this time, they need to isolate and get re-tested for COVID. These recommendations are a bit different than the CDC's recommendations, but the full guidelines can be found here:
<https://www.mass.gov/guidance/information-and-guidance-for-persons-in-quarantine-due-to-covid-19>
- Technically, only the exposed family member is expected to quarantine if that person is asymptomatic. However, we recommend that the entire household minimize contact with others whenever there is concern that someone has been exposed.

My child was just diagnosed with COVID. What do we do now?

- Children, for the most part, do not get seriously ill from COVID.
- We recommend supportive care including Tylenol and Motrin, fluids, and rest.
- We are always happy to see your child if you have concerns about any of their symptoms.

My daughter was diagnosed with COVID, but no one else in my household is sick yet. How is this all going to go down?

- Individuals diagnosed with COVID must quarantine for a minimum of 10 days. Their quarantine may end after 10 days if their fever has been gone for at least 24 hours AND their symptoms are improved.
- Household contacts without symptoms must quarantine for an additional 14 days AFTER their sick family member has finished quarantine. As long as no one else gets sick, this ends up being a total of 24 days.



- If anyone else in the house becomes ill during quarantine, they must begin their own 10+ day quarantine starting on the first day of their symptoms. All other household members without symptoms must restart their 14 day quarantine after the newest sick family member has ended their quarantine.

My daughter was just diagnosed with COVID, and she has asthma. I'm so worried! Are kids with asthma considered high risk?

- Good news! Asthma does not appear to be a risk factor for severe COVID.
- Any children with difficulty breathing or chest pain should be evaluated. Call our office and ask to speak to our nurses if your child is experiencing either of these symptoms.

Our family is in quarantine, but now my son is sick and I'm worried about him. May I request an office visit to have him looked at?

- We will see any of our patients for an urgent sick visit that cannot wait until quarantine is over. Please call and ask to speak to our nurses for advice.
- If you are in quarantine and have a non-urgent office visit booked, we kindly ask that you reschedule. This includes annual physicals or well baby exams, medication checks, chronic condition surveillance, routine lab work, and in-office procedures.