

COVID-19 Current Topics: 6-19-20

Do we still have to practice social distancing?

Unfortunately, the answer is yes. This is especially important as Austin has moved from Stage 3 to Stage 4 precautions due to rising cases.

COVID-19: Risk-Based Guidelines

Recommended thresholds 7-day avg hospital admits	Stage	Practice Good Hygiene			Wear Facial Coverings	Higher Risk Individuals Age over 65, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart, lung and kidney disease, immunocompromised, obesity			Lower Risk Individuals No substantial underlying health conditions			Workplaces Open
		Stay Home if Sick	Maintain Social Distancing	Avoid Sick People		Avoid Gatherings	Avoid Non-Essential Travel	Avoid Dining/ Shopping	Avoid Gatherings	Avoid Non-Essential Travel	Avoid Dining/ Shopping	
0	Stage 1	•				greater than 25		except with precautions	gathering size TBD			all businesses
< 5	Stage 2	•	•	•	•	greater than 10		except as essential	greater than 25		except with precautions	essential and reopened businesses
5 - 19	Stage 3	•	•	•	•	social and greater than 10	•	except as essential	social and greater than 10		except with precautions	essential and reopened businesses
20 - 70	Stage 4	•	•	•	•	social and greater than 2	•	except as essential	social and greater than 10	•	except expanded essential businesses	expanded essential businesses
> 70	Stage 5	•	•	•	•	outside of household	•	except as essential	outside of household	•	except as essential	essential businesses only

Use this color-coded alert system to understand the stages of risk. This chart provides recommendations on what people should do to stay safe during the pandemic. Individual risk categories identified pertain to known risks of complication and death from COVID-19. This chart is subject to change as the situation evolves.


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<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/Risk%20Based%20Guidance%20-%20DRAFT%2012.pdf>

My child has been exposed to COVID-19; what do we need to do?

If you or your child has been exposed to COVID-19, you do not need to come to the office for testing unless certain criteria apply. Stay home and monitor for symptoms of illness (any or all of these: temperatures over 100.4, cough, trouble breathing not caused by nasal congestion, loss of taste).

- If there are NO symptoms of illness with a known positive exposure to COVID-19: To be safe, assume that COVID-19 could be present and quarantine x 14 days. At this time, no testing can be done in our office for those without symptoms.
- If, YES, there ARE symptoms of illness with a known positive exposure to COVID-19: It is safe to monitor your child at home and quarantine x 14 days as long as there are no symptoms of trouble breathing, fever is well controlled, your child is well-hydrated, and not in distress, If you'd like PCR testing to confirm infection with COVID-19, call our office to discuss.

My child has been exposed to someone who has been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; now what??

This is complicated.

- If both your child and the person exposed to a person with COVID-19 have NO SYMPTOMS, you do not need to come to the office for evaluation. Monitor your child at home for development of symptoms and continue your usual daily life activities practicing social distancing as done over the past 3 months.
- If your child has no symptoms but the person exposed to a person with COVID DOES HAVE SYMPTOMS, you do not need to come to the office for evaluation. Monitor your child at home. To be safe, assume that COVID-19 could be present and quarantine x 14 days. At this time, no testing can be done in our office for those without symptoms.
- If, YES, there ARE symptoms of illness in your child: It is safe to monitor your child at home and quarantine x 14 days as long as there are no symptoms of trouble breathing, fever is well controlled, your child is well-hydrated, and not in distress, If you'd like PCR testing to confirm infection with COVID-19, call our office to discuss.

Where can I go if I want COVID-19 testing but cannot receive it at PAA?

First, let's review the 2 main types of testing for COVID-19.

1. PCR testing for current infection

This is the type of testing performed at PAA for those with exposure to COVID-19 who are symptomatic. PCR testing detects the presence of viral RNA (genetic material) in the body, indicating a current infection. The test requires nasopharyngeal secretions obtained via a q-tip passed through the nostril, until resistance is met, at the back of the posterior nasopharynx. The swab is then rotated several times. Test duration is approximately 15 seconds. Results are received in 2-7 days.

2. Antibody testing for past infection

This type of test relies on serology and detects antibodies against the virus, which shows a past infection. While information is changing daily, as of today, these tests have not been widely approved for children, nor is it clear whether a positive result indicates active infection, lasting immunity, or other clinically relevant information.

This website is a great resource listing places for COVID-19 testing:

<https://www.kut.org/post/map-drive-thru-covid-19-testing-locations-austin-and-how-access-them>. It also notes that Austin Public Health (APH) has an online tool which "allows patients to input their symptoms and, if necessary, get a referral to a drive-thru testing site that day. The online assessment and the test are free." A link to this site is found here: https://covid19.austintexas.gov/s/?language=en_US. "APH said it doesn't share its testing site locations with the public, so you won't see them all in the map above. But those who are referred for a test will be told where to go."

Here's a quick review of guidance on kids attending camps

This is an area where we are still receiving lots of calls. The American Academy of Pediatrics has some great guidance on this issue. They state "Some camps may require virologic testing, especially for campers or staffers who have COVID-19 symptoms or have known exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. If a camp institutes a COVID-19 testing protocol, it is important to recognize that testing has limitations. It only shows a current infection and doesn't preclude someone from testing positive later in the camp session."

Tests also may be negative during the early incubation period. Decisions should not be made based on serologic testing for antibodies, which has additional limitations. Campers and staff members should take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus, including social distancing, proper hand hygiene and wearing cloth face coverings (over age 2 years) as feasible. While these can be challenging in a camp environment, directors should find ways to encourage these practices and make them part of the daily routine.”

Unfortunately, our resources for testing are quite limited at this time, and we are still unable to perform screening tests for camps requiring COVID-19 results before attendance. This is subject to change, and we will keep you updated if we are able to accommodate the PCR test in this capacity in the future. If these tests are needed, please review the paragraph above for potential testing sites.

References:

- <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/guidance-for-families-and-pediatricians-on-camp-attendance-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- <https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/06/12/campguidance061220>
- <http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/Risk%20Based%20Guidance%20-%20DRAFT%202012.pdf>