

COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is COVID-19 and what are the symptoms of COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infection caused by a new strain of Coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. Many people believe that COVID-19 is similar to Influenza, and while both are contagious respiratory illnesses, they are caused by different viruses and there are some key differences between the two infections. COVID-19 seems to spread more easily than influenza and can cause more serious illness in some people. In general, COVID-19 still seems to cause mild to moderate symptoms in children, but children can still have serious complications from COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include any of the following:

- Fever
- Chills
- Runny nose or nasal congestion
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of taste
- Loss of smell

It is important to note that ANY of these symptoms can occur when someone has COVID-19, and it is not necessary to have all or even several of these conditions to be positive.

How can we prevent the spread of COVID-19?

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following practices to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19:

- Stay at least 6 feet apart from other people. (“social distancing”)
 - Maintain 6 feet separation **from anyone outside your home**, but also people inside your home who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and *wash your hands*.
- When in public, wear a mask over your nose and mouth. *Masks should always be worn outdoors whenever you are interacting with those outside your household!*
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you do, wash your hands afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
 - This includes things such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
 - Monitor your health every day, watching for symptoms like fever, cough, shortness of breath, or even runny nose, congestion, diarrhea, body aches and headaches. If you develop symptoms, talk to your doctor.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Take care of yourself! Eat well-balanced meals, drink plenty of water, and get adequate sleep to help maintain a healthy body.

Do I need to wear a mask?

When to Wear a Mask

- Wear a mask with the best fit, protection, and comfort for you.
- If you are 2 years or older and are not [up to date](#) with your COVID-19 vaccines, [wear a mask](#) indoors in public.
- In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. In areas of [substantial or high transmission](#), people might choose to wear a mask outdoors when in sustained [close contact](#) with other people, particularly if
 - They or someone they live with has a [weakened immune system](#) or is at [increased risk for severe disease](#).
 - They are not [up to date](#) on COVID-19 vaccines or live with someone who is not up to date on COVID-19 vaccines.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are [up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccines. They should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you are [up to date](#) with your COVID-19 vaccines, to maximize protection and prevent possibly spreading COVID-19 to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area [of substantial or high transmission](#).
- [Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and train stations. Travelers are not required to wear a mask in outdoor areas of a conveyance (like on open deck areas of a ferry or the uncovered top deck of a bus).

What type of testing is available at Montgomery Pediatrics?

We offer two types of testing at Montgomery Pediatrics – a PCR test that is sent to the lab at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and the Abbott ID NOW test that is run in our office. Both tests are molecular nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT), and both are suitably sensitive for detecting SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. We do not offer antigen testing at Montgomery Pediatrics. While we try our best to perform the test with same day results, there are times when significantly high test volumes lead to results taking 24-48 hours to return.

Testing can also be done at the CCHMC neighborhood locations, ***with a doctor’s order***. In those situations, your doctor will send an order to Children’s, and then you will call the *COVID-19 Scheduling Center* at **513-517-2670** to schedule an appointment for your child’s test. If we cannot accommodate a test within the time you require it, please see this comprehensive list of other locations that can provide free PCR testing: [No cost PCR testing sites](#). Please note: unless your child is acutely ill and in need of immediate medical attention, it is ***not*** recommended that you go to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care for COVID testing.

What’s the difference between quarantine and isolation?

Quarantine keeps *someone who might have been exposed to the virus* away from others. Quarantine means staying at home and not leaving the house for any reason. This includes trips

to the grocery store, the gas station, the drug store, etc. If you are required to quarantine, even *short* trips out of the house should not occur and will put others in the community at risk.

Isolation keeps *someone who is infected with the virus* away from others, even in their own home. A person who is infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, should **isolate** if at all possible, not just quarantine. This means staying in a separate room or area in the house (a “sick room” or “sick area”) and using a separate bathroom if available. Individuals who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and **do not** have any symptoms should still **isolate** at home if possible.

Obviously, isolation can be challenging or even impossible in certain cases in the pediatric population. In situations where your child is too young to isolate, or has special needs that would prohibit isolation, we recommend the child try to isolate with one parent or family member as much as possible.

Do I need to quarantine if I was exposed, and if so, for how long?

Click [here](#) for current CDC guidelines if you were exposed and you are up to date on your COVID vaccination.

Click [here](#) for current CDC guidelines if you were exposed and you are **NOT** up to date on your COVID vaccination.

Definition of “Up-To-Date” on COVID-19 Vaccinations

- For Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, this means it has been more than 2 weeks and less than 5 months since your 2nd dose OR you have received your booster dose.
- For the J&J vaccine, this means it has been more than 2 weeks and less than 2 months since your 1st dose OR you have received your booster dose.

What do I do if I test positive to COVID-19?

Click [here](#) for current CDC guidelines if you test positive for COVID-19 (regardless of your vaccination status).

What is MIS-C?

MIS-C stands for Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children. It is a rare, but serious, condition associated with COVID-19 that can cause inflammation in multiple organ systems in the body including, but not limited to, the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, and gastrointestinal system. Children with MIS-C will typically have a fever, abdominal pain with vomiting or diarrhea, a rash, possibly respiratory symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath, and possibly altered mental status like confusion or excessive sleepiness. It is important to note that this condition is still quite rare in the pediatric population. If you are concerned about MIS-C, you should call your pediatrician immediately to determine if your child needs to be seen in the office, or if a more emergent evaluation in the emergency room is necessary.

If my child had COVID-19, does he or she need to be cleared by a doctor to return to sports?

In most cases, yes, but this largely depends on what is required by the school or the organization sponsoring the sport. COVID-19 can have serious effects on the cardiovascular system, specifically a condition called myocarditis. Myocarditis is a condition in which there is inflammation of the heart muscle, and it is a known cause of sudden death during exercise in young athletes. It is important to note that SARS-CoV-2 is not the only virus that causes myocarditis. For years we have known that **many** other viruses, such as Epstein-Barr virus, coxsackie virus, adenovirus, influenza virus, and many others can cause viral myocarditis.

If your child has had less than 4 days of fever, muscle aches, fatigue, and has had mild symptoms, we may be able to do a telehealth visit to clear for sports, unless your school or organization requires a physical exam. If there is a longer duration of illness or any concerning symptoms (or if your school or organization requires it), we will need to see the patient in office for clearance. In some cases, with more severe or prolonged symptoms, a clearance by a cardiologist may be needed. If this is determined to be necessary, we can refer you to the [Cardiology Department at Cincinnati Children's](#).

At a minimum, children who have COVID-19 should not return to sports participation until at least 10 days after the start of their symptoms and 24 hours symptom free.