

What if my child gets sick at home?

COVID-19 symptoms can easily be confused with cold/flu/allergy symptoms. If your child has any of the following symptoms, it is important to consider the possibility of COVID.

If your child develops one of the symptoms in bold, or any combination of the symptoms below, please keep your child home and call the School Nurse at your child's school:

- **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Fatigue, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

Source: "DESE/DPH Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios," 8/13/2021

Based on your child's symptoms and history, the nurse will help you to determine whether your child needs to get tested for COVID-19.

A free **PCR test** can be obtained at the Somerville Health & Human Services Department, 50 Evergreen Avenue, across from Winter Hill Community School. Special hours have been set aside for students and their families, but you will need to notify your School Nurse if you plan to go:

Tuesdays, from 1-2 pm and Thursdays, from 3-4 pm. Later hours are available by appointment.

For more information, please visit the city website:

<https://www.somervillema.gov/covid19testing>.

Additional testing is available in other communities, please visit the state website:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>

If the test is **positive**, regardless of vaccine status, your child will need to stay home and isolate for a minimum of 5 days. In addition, symptoms must improve and your child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

If the test is **negative**, but your child has one of the symptoms in bold, or any combination of symptoms, he or she will need to stay home.

In this situation, your child may return to school:

- after a **negative PCR test** and improvement in symptoms, including being fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

OR

- a **doctor makes an alternate diagnosis** (strep throat, ear infection, etc) and your child has met the criteria to return to school for that illness. Please provide documentation to school nurse.