

COVID-19 STUDENT SCREENING TOOL

SHOULD MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL OR CHILD CARE?

*This screening tool is based on the Ontario COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care (Version 1 – October 1, 2020), and has been adapted to reflect the local context in Simcoe Muskoka.

**1. Does your child have any of the following new or worsening symptoms?
Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Fever and/or chills (temperature of 37.8°C/100.0°F or greater)	<p>If you answered “YES” to <u>any</u> of these symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Your child should stay home to isolate immediately. •Visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required. <p>If you answered “NO” to <u>all</u> of these symptoms, proceed to question 2.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cough (more than usual if chronic cough) including croup (barking cough, making a whistling noise when breathing) <i>Not related to other known conditions (e.g. asthma, reactive airway, etc.)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath (dyspnea, out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, wheeze that is worse than usual if chronically short of breath) <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. asthma)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease or loss of smell or taste (new olfactory or taste disorder) <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. nasal polyps, allergies, neurological disorders)</i>	

**2. Does your child have any of the following new or worsening symptoms?
Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions**

<input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat (painful swallowing or difficulty swallowing) <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. post nasal drip, gastroesophageal reflux)</i>	<p>If you answered “YES” to <u>two or more</u> of these symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Your child should stay home to isolate immediately. • Visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required. <p>If you answered “YES” to <u>only one</u> of these symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Your child should stay home for 24 hours from when the symptom started. •If the symptom is improving, your child may return to school/child care when they feel well enough to do so (and as per the exclusion policy of your child care centre, if relevant). A negative COVID-19 test is not required to return. •If the symptom does not improve or worsens, visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required. <p>If you answered “NO” to all of these symptoms, proceed to questions 3, 4 and 5.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Stuffy nose and/or runny nose (nasal congestion and/or rhinorrhea) <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. seasonal allergies, returning inside from the cold, chronic sinusitis unchanged from baseline, reactive airways)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Headache that is new and persistent, unusual, unexplained, or long-lasting <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. tension-type headaches, chronic migraines)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. transient vomiting due to anxiety in children, chronic vestibular dysfunction, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, side effect of medication)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue, lethargy, muscle aches or malaise (general feeling of being unwell, lack of energy, extreme tiredness, poor feeding in infants) that is unusual or unexplained <i>Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g. depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, anemia)</i>	

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3. Has your child travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If you answered “YES” to question 3, question 4 OR question 5: •Your child should stay home to isolate immediately and follow the advice of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. •If your child develops symptoms, you should visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required.
4. Has your child been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19 by your local public health unit (or from the COVID Alert app if they have on their own phone)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Has your child been directed by a health care provider including public health official to isolate? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

If you answered “YES” to any of the questions in the above screening tool, please follow the advice provided.

- To find out when your child can return to school/child care please refer to the SMDHU’s resource [“My child did not pass the COVID-19 daily screening. Now what?”](#)

If you answered “NO” to all of the questions in this screening tool, your child may attend school.

Please Note: After developing symptoms, in general, children should no longer have a fever and their symptoms should be improving to be able to return to school/child care. Mild symptoms known to persist in young children (e.g. runny nose or mild cough that may persist following infections) may be ongoing at time of return to school/child care if other symptoms have resolved.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. My child has woken up not feeling well, what do I do?

If you notice that your child has **new or worsening** symptoms, what you do depends on the symptoms and how usual they are for your child. If your child has new or worsening:

- Fever/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Decreased or loss of smell or taste

Your child should isolate immediately and you should visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required.

If your child has **ONE** new or worsening symptom (that is not related to a known cause or condition) that includes:

- Sore throat
- Stuffy nose/runny nose
- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise

Your child should stay home for 24 hours to be monitored to see whether the symptom gets better or worse. If they start to feel better and symptom are improving, they can return to school/child care when well enough (and in accordance to school/child care policy) to do so and no COVID-19 testing is needed.

If the symptoms get worse, you should visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required.

If your child has **TWO or MORE** new or worsening symptoms (that are not related to a known cause or condition) that include:

- Sore throat
- Stuffy nose/runny nose
- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches or malaise

Your child should isolate immediately and you should visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required.

To find out when your child can return to school/child care please refer to “My child did not pass the COVID-19 daily screening. Now what?”

2. My child has a runny nose, what should I do?

If your child's only symptom is a new or worsening runny nose, you should keep your child home and monitor their symptoms as you would in any other year. When they feel better, they are ready to go back to school/child care and no COVID-19 testing is needed. If they get worse or develop other symptoms, you should visit an assessment centre for testing and/or seek medical advice, if required. Mild symptoms known to persist in young children (e.g. runny nose) may be ongoing at time of return to school/child care if other symptoms have been resolved.

3. Who in my family needs to be tested along with my child?

If your child has been identified as needing a test and everyone else in the family is well, no testing of other family members is needed, and this additional testing would not fit within testing criteria at local assessment centres. If your child tests positive for COVID-19, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit will contact you/your child and make a plan for additional testing of all close contacts.

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4. Do I need a note from a doctor before my child goes back to school/child care or a copy of a negative test result?

No, you do not need a note from your doctor or proof of a negative test before your child returns to school/ child care. However, your school may request that you complete an attestation form, indicating which option you have chosen for safe return to school. A [sample attestation form](#) is available on SMDHU's website.

5. What happens if I choose not to follow the advice on the screening tool and do not have my child tested or seen by a health care provider for their new or worsening symptoms?

If your child was not tested for COVID-19 and has not been given an alternate diagnosis, they must begin a self-isolation period for minimum of 10 days from the start of their symptoms. After self-isolating for 10 days, they may return to school or child care if they do not have a fever and if it has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started improving.

6. I need more information to feel confident in my assessment, what do I do?

For additional information about COVID-19, please refer to the [SMDHU website](#) or contact Health Connection at 705-721-720 (toll free: 1-877-721-7520). If you have a question specific to your child's health, please contact your primary health care provider.

*This screening checklist is based on the Ministry of Health **COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in School and Child Care** (Version 1 – October 1, 2020), and has been adapted to reflect the local context in Simcoe Muskoka.

My Child Did Not Pass the COVID-19 Daily Screening. Now What?

(Please see [STUDENT SCREENING TOOL](#) for details on symptoms and screening.)

NOTE: If your child has none of the symptoms of COVID-19 listed below, **AND** they have not travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days, **AND** they have not been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19 **AND** have not been directed by a healthcare provider or public health to isolate → **they may go to school and/or child care.**

If your child has a new or worsening symptom (not related to a known cause or condition):

- Fever/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Decreased or loss of smell or taste

OR

If your child has **TWO or MORE** new or worsening symptoms (that are not related to a known cause or condition) that include:

- Sore throat
- Stuffy nose/runny nose
- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches or malaise

If your child has **ONE** new or worsening symptom (that is not related to a known cause or condition) that include:

- Sore throat
- Stuffy nose/runny nose
- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise

WAIT

Your child should **stay home for 24 hours** to be monitored to see whether the symptoms get better or worse.

GO - If symptoms improve

If within 24 hours your child starts to feel better and **symptoms are improving**, they can return to school and/or child care when well enough to do so. COVID-19 testing is not needed.

If your child has:
Travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.
OR
Been identified as a close contact of someone who is confirmed as having COVID-19.
OR
Has been directed by a healthcare provider or public health to isolate.

STOP

Your child must not attend school or child care. Contact the school or child care to let them know.

Your child should isolate (stay home) and follow the advice of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

If your child develops symptoms, you should **visit a COVID-19 assessment centre for testing** and/or seek medical advice, if required.

Follow the return to school and child care protocol for children/students on page 2.

STOP

Your child must not attend school or child care. Contact the school or child care to let them know.

Your child should isolate and **visit a COVID-19 assessment centre for testing** and/or seek medical advice, if required.

Follow the return to school and child care protocol for children/students on page 2.

STOP - If symptoms get worse

See pg.2

See pg.2

Last revised: October 5, 2020

When Can My Child Return to School or Child Care?

If your child was advised to isolate immediately and to **visit a COVID-19 assessment centre for testing** and/or seek medical advice, if required, then follow the steps below to determine when they can return to school.

Negative COVID-19 Test Result

If your child was tested for COVID-19 they are required to self-isolate until test results are available.

If the test results are negative, your child may return to school or child care if all three of the following criteria are true:

They do not have a fever (without taking medication)

AND

It has been at least 24 hours since symptoms started improving

AND

They have not been in close physical contact with a person who currently has COVID-19.

Not Tested for COVID-19

If your child received an alternate diagnosis from their primary health care provider (i.e. it is not believed to be COVID-19), your child may return to school or child care once it has been at least 24 hours since symptoms started improving.

OR

If your child has not been given an alternate diagnosis and was not tested for COVID-19, they must begin a self-isolation period for minimum of 10 days from the start of their symptoms. After self-isolating for 10 days, they may return to school or child care if they do not have a fever and if it has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started improving.

Positive COVID-19 Test Result

If your child received a positive COVID-19 test result, they can return to school or child care when:

They have completed 10 days of isolation after the onset of symptoms

AND

No longer have a fever

AND

Symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.

* **Medical documentation is not required to return to school. Schools or child care may request that parents/guardians complete a *COVID-19 Return to School and/or Child Care Attestation Form* and submit it to the school/child care upon your child's return.**

***All household members of the symptomatic child are to self-monitor for 14 days. They can continue to go to child care, school or work as long as they have not developed symptoms themselves, and as long as the ill child has not been diagnosed with COVID-19.**

Last revised: October 5, 2020

Please note:

In general, children should no longer have a fever and their symptoms should be improving to be able to return to school/child care.

HAVE YOUR CHILD TESTED

Assessment centres are located throughout the County of Simcoe and District of Muskoka and are listed on our website at:

www.smdhu.org/COVID19

Testing for children may include the following depending on the assessment centre and the health care provider:

- Nasopharyngeal swab – a thin flexible swab is inserted into the nose to the back of the nose/throat (preferred and recommended method)
- Throat swab – a larger, sturdier swab is inserted into the mouth to the back of the throat/tonsils area (alternative testing method for children who cannot tolerate a nasopharyngeal swab)

IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO HAVE YOUR CHILD TESTED

It is difficult for a health care provider to rule out COVID-19 without a test. The actions you take to understand your child's symptoms will impact when they can return to childcare and/or school. **Children who are tested may be able to return to child care or school sooner than if they are not tested.**

If the screening tool indicates that your child should be tested for COVID-19 and/or should seek medical assessment, if required, and you choose to have your child assessed by a health care provider:

- Then, if the healthcare provider gives an alternate diagnosis (i.e. not COVID), your child can return to school and/or child care after symptoms start improving for at least 24 hours.
- If the health care provider gives an alternate diagnosis which is clearly non-infectious, they can return to school and/or child care prior to symptom improvement.

If the screening advises that your child should be tested for COVID-19 and/or should seek medical assessment, if required, and you choose not to have your child tested or seen by a health care provider:

- Then your child will need to isolate (stay home) for 10 days from the time their symptoms started (even if symptoms go away). After self-isolating for 10 days, they may return to school and/or child care if they have been at least 24 hours without a fever (without taking medication) and if their symptoms are improving.
- Due to the mild and/or fairly brief duration of symptoms often seen with COVID-19, it is difficult for a health care provider to rule out COVID-19, without testing or an alternate diagnosis.
- If there is a positive COVID-19 result, SMDHU will conduct case and contact management and provide guidance. For more information, refer to the SMDHU's school protocol for when students/staff test positive for COVID-19 and school protocol for when a COVID-19 outbreak is declared.

HOW TO GET YOUR CHILD'S TEST RESULTS

For test results, visit covid-19.ontario.ca and click on "check your lab results" or check other laboratory online portals you already subscribe to (e.g. Life Labs, Dynacare).

WHAT DOES A NEGATIVE TEST MEAN?

If your child tests negative for COVID-19, it means the test could not identify the virus at the time their sample was collected. It does not mean that they will not be exposed to, test positive for or become sick with COVID-19 at any time after their test.

Visit www.smdhu.org or contact Health Connection if you have any questions at 1-877-721-7520

Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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