

Dear Patients and Families,

We continue to encourage everyone to wear a mask when in public spaces, perform frequent handwashing, and practice social distancing.

This week we are seeing the highest number of cases in Massachusetts since the beginning of the pandemic.

December was very busy and we are anticipating a very difficult and extremely busy month of January (especially the next 2 weeks). To help everyone understand when to isolate and when to quarantine we are providing the below guidelines.

**Please do not call the office for questions about what to do if your child has been exposed to COVID or has been diagnosed with COVID - refer to the guidelines below!**

Most of your questions will be answered in the guidelines

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The following guidelines provide the most recent recommendations for managing individuals with a positive COVID test, as well as identified close contacts of people with COVID.

Please see the CDC Website for instructions on the difference between [isolation and quarantine](#).

## **Positive COVID Test**

Positive test for COVID (either by rapid antigen test or PCR test) regardless of vaccination status.

- a positive rapid antigen test does not need to be confirmed with a PCR test

### **Guidelines:**

1. Stay at home for 5 days
2. No symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days, patient can leave house
3. Wear a mask around others for 5 more days (this includes wearing a mask at home as well as outside the home)
  - If unable to wear a mask, isolate at home for a total of 10 days
4. Continue to stay home until fever has resolved for 24 hours
5. Send a MyChart message to let us know

*Please note: the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) agrees with the above isolation guidelines (5 days at home, 5 days masked) and does not require a negative test to return to school.*

### **Reasons to call the office for guidance:**

1. Chest pain
2. Increased work of breathing/labored breathing
3. Concerns for dehydration
4. Fever (> 101) for more than 72 hours in child younger than 2 years of age
5. Fever (>101) for more than 120 hours (5 days) in child 2 years of age or older

## **Cardiac Clearance Requirements:**

1. Applies only to children over 12 years old
2. An office visit is required at least 10 days after symptoms are resolved if:
  - o Greater than 4 days of fever > 100.4 degrees
  - o Greater than 7 days of muscle aches, chills, or extreme fatigue
  - o Hospitalized
3. For all others with asymptomatic or mild disease, you may call the office once out of isolation (see above) and a nurse will assist you in providing a clearance letter for a graduated return-to-play protocol
  - o This applies if there was less than 4 days of fever >100.4 and less than 7 days of muscle aches, chills, or extreme fatigue

## **Close Contact of Individual with COVID** **(Fully Vaccinated)**

This guideline is for people identified as a close contact of an individual with COVID and have had either:

- Received 3 doses of either the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccine or
- Received 2 doses of the J+J Vaccine (or 1 J+J and 1 Pfizer/Moderna) or
- Received 2 doses of either the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccine within the last 6 months or
- Received the J+J Vaccine within the last 2 months

### **Guidelines:**

1. Wear a mask around others (including at home) for 10 days
  - o If unable to wear a mask, isolate at home for a total of 10 days
2. Test on day 5 (if possible)
  - o Negative rapid antigen tests should be confirmed with a PCR test
  - o Positive rapid antigen tests are assumed to be positive and do not need confirmation
3. If any symptoms develop, get a tested and stay home

## **Close Contact of Individual with COVID** **(Not Fully Vaccinated)**

People who have been identified as a close contact of an individual with COVID and have had either:

- Received 2 doses of either the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccine over 6 months ago and have not been boosted
- Received 1 dose of the J+J Vaccine over 2 months ago and are not boosted
- Received 1 dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccine
- Not received any COVID Vaccines

### **Guidelines:**

1. Stay at home for 5 days. After that, wear a mask around others for 5 additional days
  - o If unable to wear a mask, isolate at home for a total of 10 days

2. If unable to quarantine, wear a mask for 10 days
3. Test on Day 5 (if possible) with PCR test preferred
  - Negative rapid antigen tests should be confirmed with a PCR test
  - Positive rapid antigen tests are assumed to be positive and do not need confirmation
4. If any symptoms develop, get a test and stay home

### **A Word About Continuous Exposure:**

Please note that if your exposure is continuous and you are unable to separate from someone who has COVID, you are being exposed to COVID every day. The quarantine period is longer since your date of last exposure is constantly changing.

For example, if a mother tests positive for COVID and is unable to separate from a baby. The baby is therefore being exposed to COVID on each day that the mother remains infectious (10 days, assuming mild symptoms). The baby then needs an additional 10 days of quarantine starting when the mother is no longer assumed to be infectious. In this scenario, the baby should be tested 5 days after the mother is no longer infectious (day 15 after her diagnosis) and needs to quarantine for 20 days total.