



# Information for Parents/Caregivers of High-risk Contacts of COVID-19

Your child has been identified as a high-risk contact of a person with COVID-19. This does not mean that they have COVID-19. However, a person could be infected and just not know it yet. It can take the virus up to 10 days to develop in the body following an exposure.

To reduce the potential spread of illness to others, your child is now required to self-isolate.\* This means to stay home and avoid contact with others as much as possible.

## Public health support

- All parents/caregivers whose children are high-risk contacts of COVID-19 will be called by a public health professional who will check in on your child throughout the isolation period. You will be provided more information and be able to ask questions. You will also be told when your child's self-isolation period ends. It may be different from classmates.\*
- Some public health organizations outside of our area may be assisting TBDHU with case and contact management. The call you are expecting from public health could show up on your caller ID as an unknown number or a number from a different area code. Please answer the call.

## Instructions for self-isolating

### Stay home and avoid contact with others

- Do not invite friends over. Do not have visitors unless they are essential (i.e. care providers – tell them that your child is a close contact of COVID-19).
- Your child should stay away from older adults and people with chronic medical conditions (i.e. diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- As much as possible, your child should stay in a separate room. If they are around other people make sure that there is good airflow. Everyone should always keep a distance of at least two metres and wear a mask that covers the nose, mouth and chin without gaps if unable to physically distance.
- If there is another adult at home, choose one of you to be the main caregiver for your child.
- Children with symptoms of COVID-19 should not go outside. If they do not have symptoms, they may go onto a balcony or into a private enclosed yard. They should stay within 2 metres of the property boundary to avoid close contact with others.

## Symptoms of COVID-19

COVID-19 can feel like a cold or flu and can cause the following symptoms (new or worsening and not related to known causes or conditions).

<b>Most common symptoms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever (temperature of 37.8°C/100°F or higher)</li> <li>• Chills</li> <li>• Cough</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Decrease or loss of taste or smell</li> </ul>	<b>Other symptoms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sore throat or difficulty swallowing</li> <li>• Runny, stuffy or congested nose</li> <li>• Abdominal pain</li> <li>• Headache, unusual or long lasting</li> <li>• Pink eye/conjunctivitis</li> </ul>	<b>Symptoms in adults (aged 18+)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue/extreme tiredness</li> <li>• Muscle aches (unusual or long lasting)</li> </ul>
		<b>Symptoms in children (under age 18)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea</li> <li>• Decreased or lack of appetite (for young children and infants)</li> </ul>

If anyone has any worsening symptoms, call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 or a healthcare provider. For urgent medical help, call 911. Advise care providers that your child is a high-risk contact of COVID-19.

## Getting tested for COVID-19

- Test results are important! To schedule your child's test, contact the assessment centre nearest you. Appointments are required.

In Thunder Bay, call (807) 935-8100 or book online at <http://bit.ly/tbayschooltesting>. Testing for student cohorts takes place at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre Medical Building beside the main hospital.

For information on assessment centres in the district, visit [TBDHU.com/testing info](http://TBDHU.com/testinginfo) or call 1-888-294-6630.

If you call to book an appointment be sure to indicate what school your child attends, as well as the testing date that was provided to you by the school.

- If your child's test result is negative, the full self-isolation period must still be completed.\* Please wait until your end of isolation (day 10) phone call with the public health professional is completed before ending self-isolation.
- If the test result is positive, you will be followed up by a Public Health Nurse from TBDHU.
- If anyone else in the home had any symptoms recently, if they have them now or if any develop, even if they seem very mild, they are strongly encouraged to get tested. Everyone in the home is then required to self-isolate until test results come back. If the person with symptoms does not get tested, they must self-isolate for 10 days from symptom onset. If they cannot self-isolate from household members, household members are required to self-isolate for an additional 10 days after the unwell person's 10-day isolation period is over.

## Self-isolation of household members

- If your child **HAS** or **develops** any symptoms of COVID-19, even if mild, all those in the same home who are not fully vaccinated or who have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days must also self-isolate right away and not leave the home. Everyone should closely monitor their health for any signs of illness.
- If your child **DOES NOT** have any symptoms of COVID-19, household members are asked to only leave the home for essential reasons, such as for work, school, child care, groceries or medicines.
- If your whole household is self-isolating, ask friends or extended family members to pick up groceries or other supplies for you, or arrange for the things you need to be delivered. Have items left at your door so there is no contact with the delivery person.

**Note:** Self-isolation requirements for people who are fully vaccinated and for those who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days are explained in further detail on the next page.

## Protect everyone in the home

### Practice good hand hygiene

- Everyone should wash their hands well and often with soap and water. If these are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used.
- Have your child use paper towel to dry their hands, or a cloth towel that no one else shares.

### Keep your environment clean

- Have your child use a separate bathroom if you have one. If not, disinfect common surfaces after your child has been in there – such as light switches, handles, doorknobs, etc.
- Disinfect other high-touch surfaces in your home including remote controls twice daily.

### Cover coughs and sneezes

- Coach your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow, but not their hands. They should throw used tissues into a lined wastebasket and wash their hands right away. The person who empties that wastebasket should wash their hands right after too.

## Instructions for individuals who are fully vaccinated or who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days.

An individual is considered “fully vaccinated” once 14 days have passed after receiving a second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or their first dose of a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

An individual is considered “previously positive” if they were a confirmed case of COVID-19 and their initial result was within the last 90 days and they have since been cleared of their infection.

The guidance below applies to all individuals who are “fully vaccinated” and who are “previously positive”, but DOES NOT include the following:

- residents of long-term care homes
- residents of retirement homes
- individuals who are immunocompromised
- residents of high-risk congregate living settings
- patients admitted to health care settings

### Self-isolation

- As long as individuals have no symptoms of COVID-19, and **they are not a contact of certain variants of concern**, they are not required to self-isolate at home, even if test results are pending for people in the home who have symptoms.
- They should avoid **non-essential** visits to settings with vulnerable populations or where there is a large number of unvaccinated people (i.e. **volunteering or visiting** a long-term care home, shelter, school or child care setting) for 10 days after last exposure.
- They may continue to go to these settings for **essential** reasons, such as to attend work/school/child care. However, they must report the high-risk exposure to an employer and follow any restrictions from work as specified by their manager and/or Occupational Health department.
- If they begin to show symptoms of COVID-19, they should:
  - immediately self-isolate at home
  - arrange to be tested for COVID-19 right away
  - notify TBDHU
  - advise any household members who are not fully vaccinated or “previously positive” to also self-isolate.

### Testing

- If an individual begins to show symptoms, they should be tested right away. Non-fully vaccinated household members of symptomatic household members (regardless of their vaccination status) are to self-isolate, along with anyone not considered “previously positive”).
- Please follow the guidance provided by the public health professional at the initial call regarding testing timeframes.

### Test results

- If the individual was showing symptoms and the test result is negative, they are cleared from isolation when they do not have a fever (without using medication) and it has been at least 24 hours since the symptoms started improving. If the individual experienced gastrointestinal symptoms (i.e. vomiting, diarrhea), these symptoms must be resolved for at least 48 hours before being cleared from isolation.
- If the test result is positive, the individual will be contacted by public health and given further instructions.

### Where to get more information

- Visit [TBDHU.COM/coronavirus](https://www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus) for more information about COVID-19.
- [TBDHU.COM/closecontactinfo](https://www.tbdhu.com/closecontactinfo) provides information for high-risk contacts.
- Mental health matters too! Understandably, this situation may be stressful for your family. If you are looking for support, visit [TBDHU.com/mentalhealthsupport](https://www.tbdhu.com/mentalhealthsupport) or contact your school board to see what resources they offer. Reaching out for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.
- Your child’s school will give you instructions on how your child can participate in learning activities at home if they feel well enough. The school will also inform you of when in-person classes will resume.