

MY CHILD HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT OF SOMEONE CONFIRMED TO HAVE COVID-19

Last revised: December 21, 2021

When a person is confirmed to have COVID-19, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit does an investigation to gather more information. We ask questions of the person who has COVID-19 (or their parents/guardians) and may also contact the school/child care to gather information to understand who may be at risk of exposure.

WHY IS MY CHILD A CLOSE CONTACT?

After investigating the situation, we have concluded that your child may have been exposed to COVID-19 by being close to a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 in any of the following situations:

- being in the same classroom, cohort or bus,
- being closer than 2 metres (6 feet), for 15 minutes in total (e.g., at one time, or through smaller interactions adding up to 15 minutes), when either your child or the other person was not wearing a mask.

IF MY CHILD IS A CLOSE CONTACT, DO THEY NEED TO ISOLATE?

NEW: Yes they need to self-isolate, **even if they are fully vaccinated* or had a recent COVID-19 infection.**

If your child is identified as a close contact they **must**:

- Stay home (self-isolate) from team activities, school and cannot join in additional activities or interact in person with others outside of your home.
- Be tested at a local assessment centre (do not use a rapid antigen test kit).
- Not leave your property unless it is to go for testing or to seek medical attention.

Also, if your child is **not fully vaccinated***, all members of the household that are **not fully vaccinated** are required to self-isolate for the same amount of time as the close contact (your child) is isolating, as directed in the letter received from the health unit.

*Fully Vaccinated means that you have received:

- A full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, and

Your final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was at least 14 days ago or prior to the exposure date

SHOULD I TAKE MY CHILD FOR TESTING?

Yes, regardless of your child's vaccination status, it is important to get your child tested at an assessment centre because they have been in close contact with another person that has tested positive. It is possible to get a positive test result and to be infectious to others without having any symptoms. **(Please do not use an at home testing kit/rapid antigen test kit).**

DOES MY CHILD NEED TO ISOLATE IF THEIR COVID-19 TEST IS NEGATIVE?

Yes, your child must isolate for the full time period indicated by the health unit, even if they don't have symptoms and even with a negative test result. This is because the COVID-19 incubation period (the period between exposure to the virus and the start of the first symptoms) can be up to 10 days from the time they were exposed to the virus.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS?

UPDATED: Anyone, regardless of their vaccination status must self-isolate and get tested if they develop **symptoms**. If someone in the household develops symptoms, then everyone else (children or adults) who are **not fully vaccinated** must stay home and isolate while awaiting test results.

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WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD'S TEST RESULT IS POSITIVE?

UPDATED: Most children with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms and are able to recover at home with a caregiver without needing hospitalization. Due to increasing COVID-19 case numbers there may be a delay before a COVID-19 case investigator is able to contact you. If your child receives a positive COVID-19 test result, continue to self isolate and follow instructions found on our [webpage](#). If your child tests positive for COVID-19 then all household members are required to self-isolate and go for testing, **even if they are fully vaccinated or had a recent COVID-19 infection**.

DO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE TO STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL/CHILD CARE OR WORK?

NEW: Yes, If the close contact (your child) is **not fully vaccinated**, all members of household that are **not fully vaccinated** are required to self-isolate for the same amount of time as the close contact, as directed in the letter received from the health unit.

HOW DO I SUPPORT MY CHILD TO ISOLATE AT HOME?

- Your child must stay in their own home unless they leave to be tested or for other medical reasons.
- An adult who already lives with the child should care for them. For children who are part of shared custody agreement, where possible, parenting exchanges should not take place when a child is isolating and should only resume once the isolation period is over.
- For young children, one healthy person should provide care and wear a mask when in close contact (within 2 metres). Gloves and eye protection can also be worn if available. For older children we recommend they keep as much distance as possible from the people they live with and wear a mask or face covering that covers their nose and mouth if they need to be within 2 metres of household members.
- If there are vulnerable people who live in the home, they should not provide care for your child unless necessary.
- Do not have any visitors to your home while your child is isolating.
- Do not share items with your child (like a drinking glass, utensils etc.) unless washed thoroughly between uses.
- If possible, have your child use a separate bathroom and bedroom. If this is not possible, clean commonly touched surfaces (like doorknobs, light switches, counters, etc.) more often.
- Encourage your child to wash their hands often with soap and water. Give them a paper towel or a cloth towel that is just for them to use.
- Your child is not allowed to attend any activities, sports, clubs, events, play dates etc. during their isolation.
- Caregivers and other members of the household should monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19.

WHY DOESN'T THE HEALTH UNIT SHARE WHO THE PERSON IS THAT TESTED POSITIVE?

Due to privacy laws, the health unit will not release personal or identifying information about any staff or student who is ill unless deemed necessary. All efforts will be made to protect the privacy of individuals who have been diagnosed.