



CDC updates COVID guidance for schools, quarantine and isolation guidance for public

August 11, 2022

Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [COVID-19](#), [Infectious Diseases](#), [Public Health](#), [Vaccine/Immunization](#)

Editor's note: For the latest news on COVID-19, visit <http://bit.ly/AAPNewsCOVID19>.

Schools are no longer recommended to use cohorts, quarantines and screening testing in most situations, under [updated COVID-19 guidance](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released Thursday.

The CDC also has relaxed its [COVID-19 guidance](#) for members of the public who are exposed or infected in an effort to minimize the disruption to their lives.

“We’re in a stronger place today as a nation, with more tools — like vaccination, boosters, and treatments — to protect ourselves, and our communities, from severe illness from COVID-19,” CDC epidemiologist Greta Massetti, Ph.D., M.P.H., author of the [community guidance](#), said in a press release. “We also have a better understanding of how to protect people from being exposed to the virus, like wearing high-quality masks, testing, and improved ventilation. This guidance acknowledges that the pandemic is not over, but also helps us move to a point where COVID-19 no longer severely disrupts our daily lives.”

Masking continues to be recommended for everyone in schools in areas with a [high COVID community level](#). However, the CDC removed recommendations to keep students in the same groups or cohorts throughout the day. Routine screening testing no longer is needed but may be considered such as during high-risk activities in a [high COVID community level](#) or when there is an outbreak.

Students and staff exposed to COVID no longer need to quarantine unless they are in high-risk congregate settings and should wear a mask for 10 days and get tested at least five days after exposure.

The Food and Drug Administration is [advising people with and without symptoms to test multiple times](#) if they get a negative result on an at-home COVID-19 antigen test due to the possibility of false-negative results.

The school guidance also calls on educators to make reasonable modifications to ensure children with disabilities and special health care needs can access in-person education. These may include masking in

classrooms or during activities and other prevention strategies to provide a safe environment. These students should not be placed into separate classrooms or segregated from other students.

A new [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) summarizes the guidance for the public, with the most significant changes around quarantine and isolation.

People who are exposed to COVID no longer need to quarantine regardless of vaccination status. They should wear a mask for 10 days when in indoor public places and get tested at least five days after exposure. If they are symptomatic, they should get tested sooner.

People with COVID symptoms or infection should isolate from others even if they are waiting for test results, according to the CDC. Those who are infected should stay in isolation for at least five days. They can end isolation on day six if they are fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication and their symptoms are improving. They should continue to wear a mask around other people at home and in public through day 10 or until they have two consecutive negative antigen tests taken at least 48 hours apart.

Regardless of when isolation ends, the CDC recommends avoiding people who are at high risk of severe illness until at least day 11. If symptoms worsen after ending isolation, restart the isolation at day 0.

People with [moderate illness](#) (including shortness of breath or difficulty breathing), [severe illness](#) (hospitalization) or a weakened immune system should isolate through day 10. Those with severe illness or weakened immune system should consult their doctor before ending isolation.

The CDC no longer recommends screening asymptomatic people without known exposures unless they are in a high-risk setting.

The CDC and AAP continue to recommend everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated and stay up to date. Everyone should wear a mask in areas with a high community level. People at high risk for severe disease should wear a mask that provides more protection at both medium and high community levels.

The updated guidance comes as the daily average of new deaths has dropped to 395, and new daily hospital admissions are just over 6,000, [according to the CDC](#).

Resources

- [CDC guidance for schools during the COVID pandemic](#)
- [CDC guidance for minimizing the impact of COVID](#)
- [Information from the AAP on COVID](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on COVID](#)