



ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Communicable Disease Division

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HEALTH UPDATE 21 – Returning Patients to Work, School, or Daycare during the COVID-19 Pandemic

August 25, 2020

Dear Partners in Health,

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, employers/schools/daycares are receiving guidance to have their employees/students/participants complete isolation in accordance with CDC guidelines, and/or be evaluated by a healthcare provider should they develop new symptom(s) compatible with COVID-19 infection.

The following actions are considered compatible with local public health recommendations to limit the potential spread of infections in work, school, and daycare settings:

For symptomatic patients:

- Isolation and return to work/school/daycare upon completion of CDC-guided time-based isolation period, OR
- Isolation and return to work/school/daycare upon symptom improvement and negative SARS-CoV-2 test, OR
- Isolation and return to work/school/daycare following evaluation and diagnosis with an alternative health condition

Additional considerations are provided in the following and attached VDH Algorithm for Evaluating a Child with COVID-19 Symptoms or Exposure: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2020/08/Evaluating-Symptoms-in-a-Child.pdf>.

Since many symptoms of COVID-19 infection are nonspecific and individuals may have coinfections with SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens, testing may be needed to confirm the diagnosis. For the current list of symptoms, please check: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

Patients with an exposure to someone with COVID-19 need to be quarantined according to CDC guidelines. Testing of contacts to COVID-19 should occur at least 5-7 days after last exposure to limit false negative results. See Alexandria Health Department's [When You Can Be Around Others](#) flyer for up-to-date guidelines.

Also attached is a sample template available for your reference if you have a need to make COVID-19 adaptations to your usual work/school excuse notes.

Thank you for all that you do to protect and promote the health and well-being of our community.

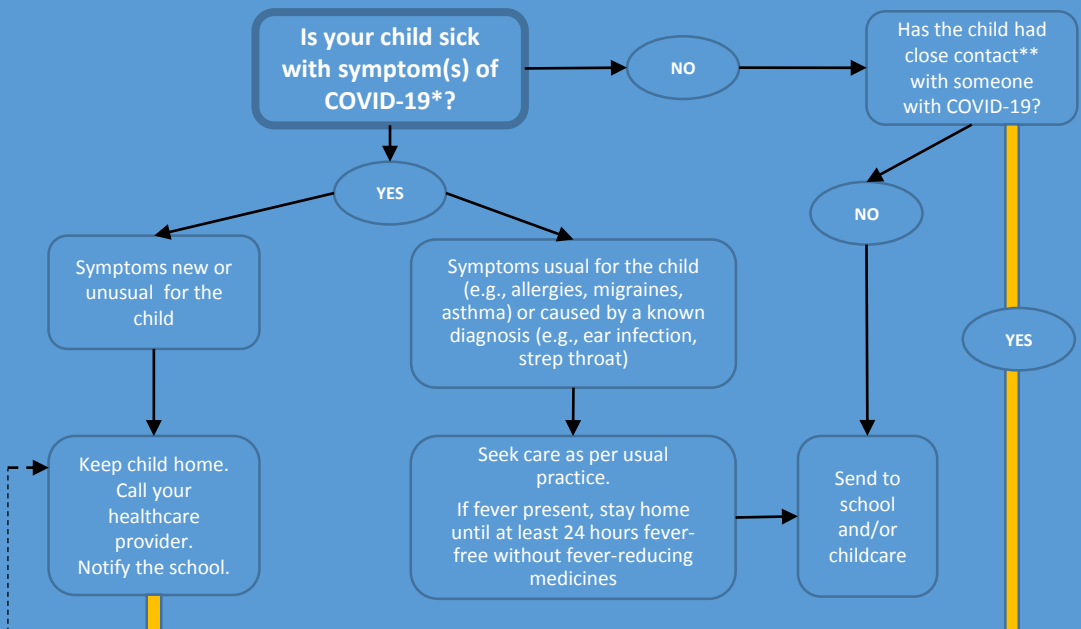
Sincerely,

Anne Gaddy, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Director
Alexandria Health Department

Kim Luk, MD, MPH
Medical Director
Alexandria Health Department

For Parents and Guardians

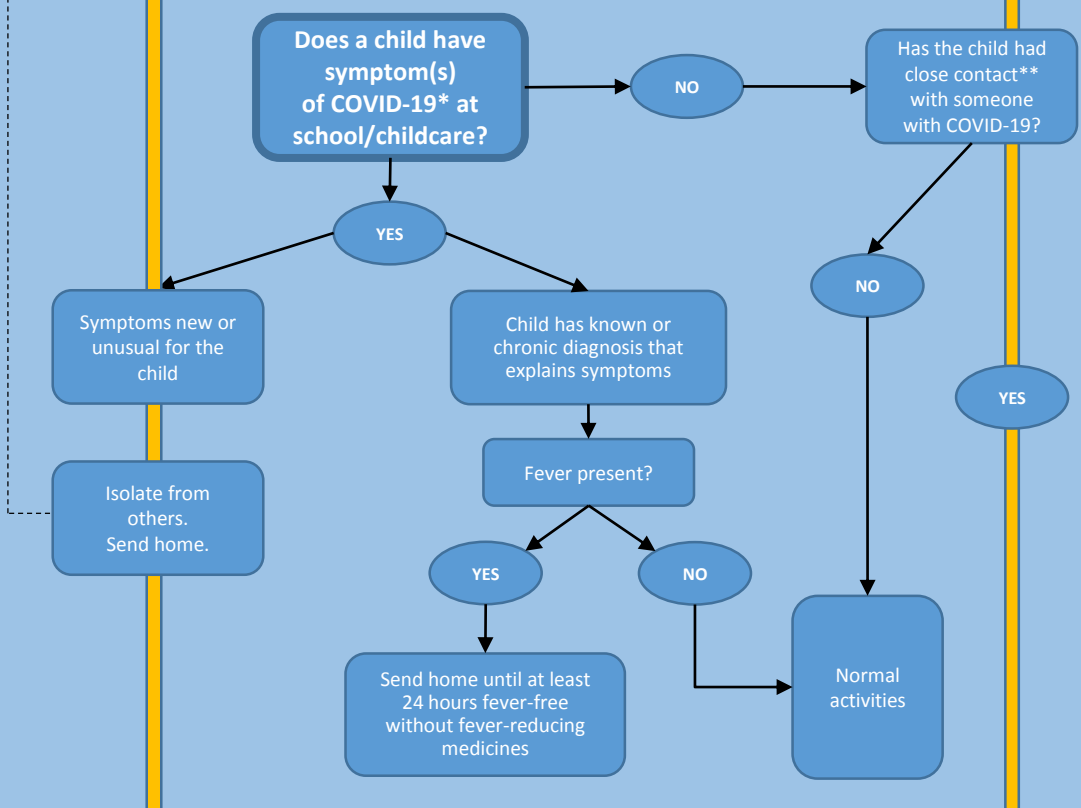
***Symptoms of COVID-19** include fever ($\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$) or chills, fatigue (more tired than usual), headache, muscle aches, cough, nasal congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, new onset poor appetite or poor feeding.



For Schools and Childcare Facilities

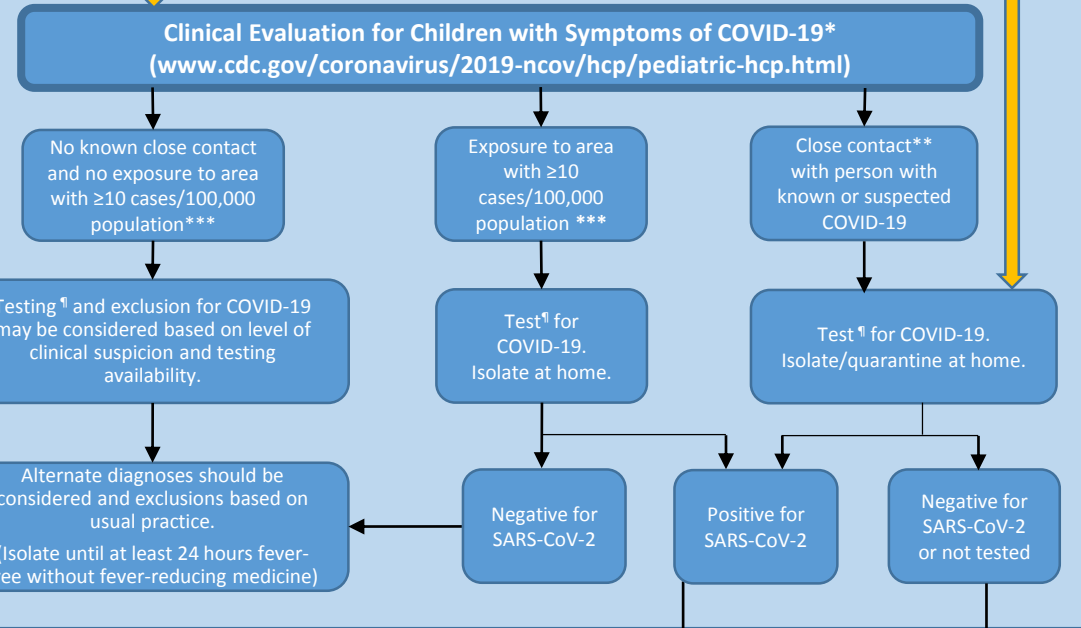
****Close contact** means being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more or direct exposure to respiratory secretions

***** ≥ 10 cases per 100,000 population** Currently all of Virginia. This will be updated with a link to data on local transmission when available.

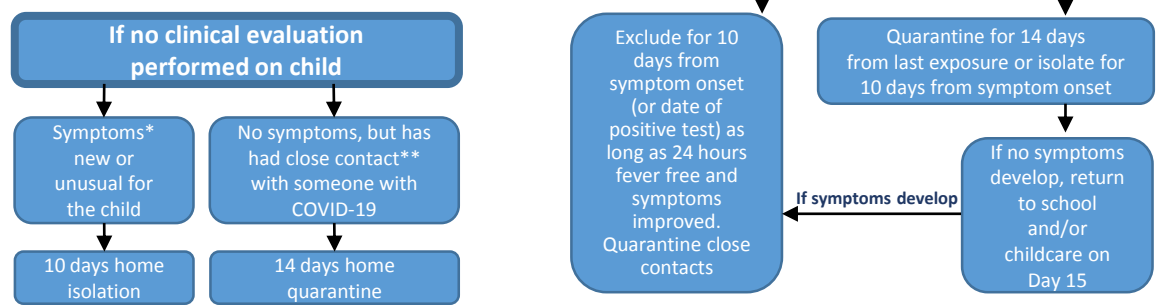


For Healthcare Providers

† Testing – PCR or antigen (Ag) testing is acceptable. If an Ag detection test is negative and there is a high clinical suspicion of COVID-19, confirm with PCR, ideally within 2 days of the initial Ag test. If RT-PCR testing is not available, clinical discretion can be used in whether to recommend the patient isolate.



Return to School and Childcare

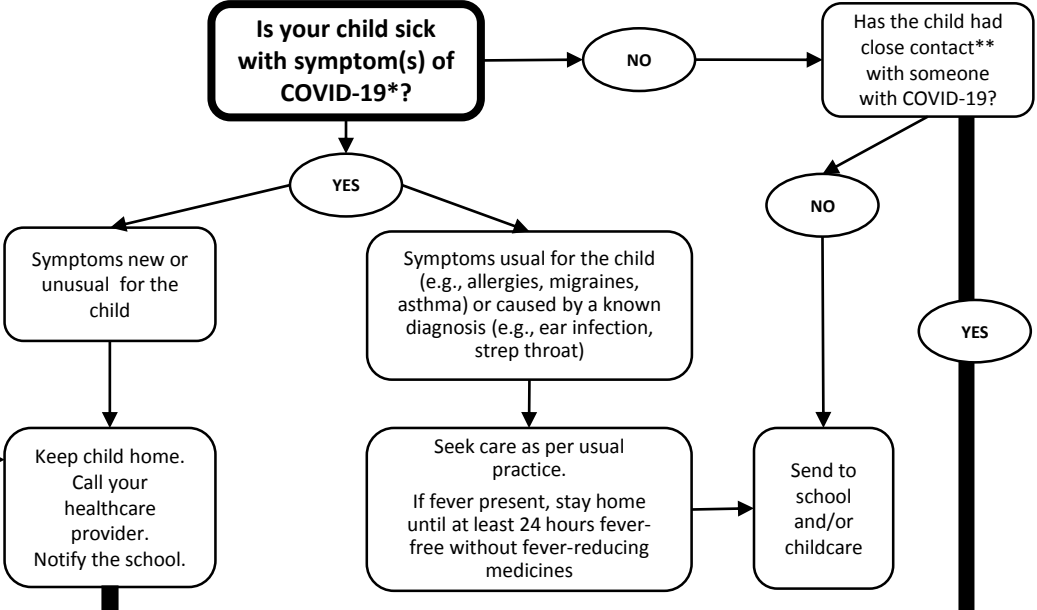


VDH Algorithm for Evaluating a Child with COVID-19 Symptoms or Exposure (August 24, 2020)

For Parents and Guardians

***Symptoms** of COVID-19 include fever ($\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$) or chills, fatigue (more tired than usual), headache, muscle aches, cough, nasal congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, new onset poor appetite or poor feeding.

Is your child sick with symptom(s) of COVID-19*?

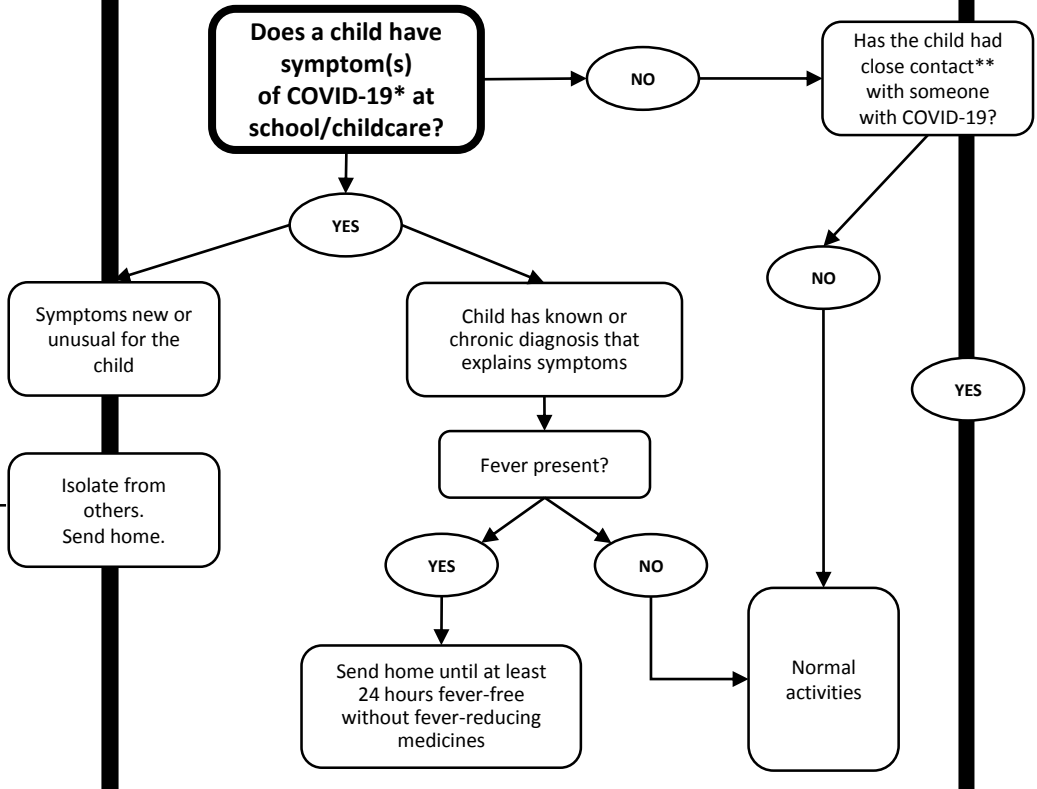


For Schools and Childcare Facilities

****Close contact** means being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more or direct exposure to respiratory secretions

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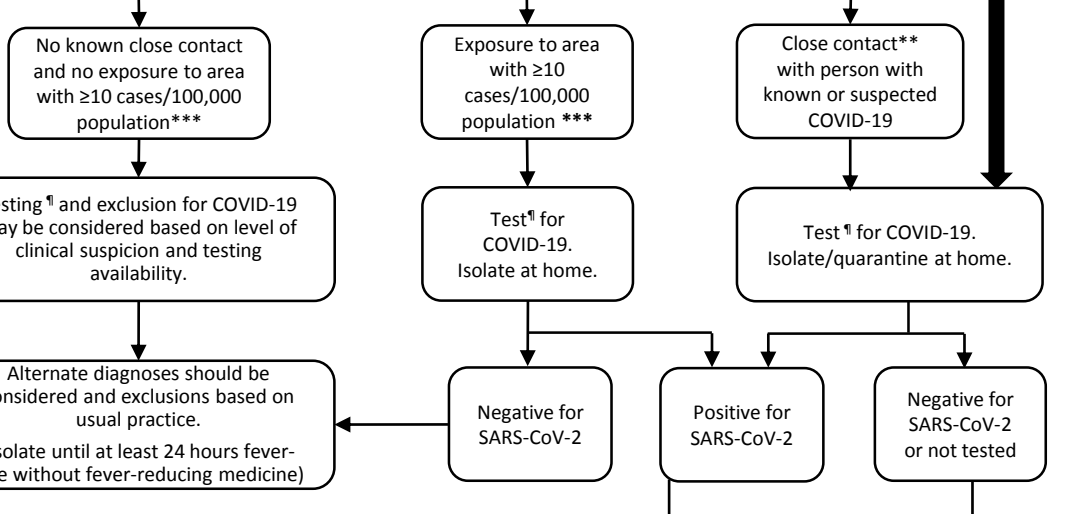
Does a child have symptom(s) of COVID-19* at school/childcare?



For Healthcare Providers

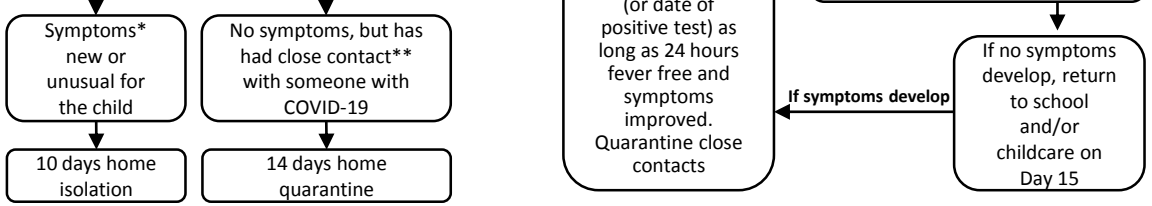
Clinical Evaluation for Children with Symptoms of COVID-19*
(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/pediatric-hcp.html)

† Testing – PCR or antigen (Ag) testing is acceptable. If an Ag detection test is negative and there is a high clinical suspicion of COVID-19, confirm with PCR, ideally within 2 days of the initial Ag test. If RT-PCR testing is not available, clinical discretion can be used in whether to recommend the patient isolate.



Return to School and Childcare

If no clinical evaluation performed on child



RE: Return to Work/School/Daycare Note (Template)

Patient Name: _____

To Whom It May Concern,

This patient is cleared to return to work, school, or daycare on _____ and does not pose a communicable risk (including from COVID-19) as of the return date noted.

Provider Signature

Date

Printed Name of Provider

Address of Practice

Additional notes (optional):
