

Acton Medical Associates

Pediatric COVID-19 Guide

Updated January 14, 2022

Do not use online scheduling for severe symptoms or medical advice, call for assistance [\(978\) 635-8914](tel:9786358914)

All COVID-19 testing appointments must be scheduled online: <https://www.actonmedical.com/covid-19-testing-for-patients/>

Given high levels of community transmission of COVID-19, we are experiencing unprecedented call volumes and portal messages related to the ongoing pandemic as well as requests for office visits. In order to best serve our patients and alleviate some of the demand, we have created this guide to answer many of your questions and minimize the need for patients to contact our office.

If a patient has tested *positive* for COVID-19:

If a patient has symptoms and tests positive for COVID-19 on any test (including a home rapid antigen test) then they may consider themselves positive for COVID-19 and do not need any additional testing.

All patients who test positive for COVID-19 may be considered contagious for up to 10 days after symptoms develop or positive test result, whichever came first. If a patient is asymptomatic after Day 5 of isolation, fever-free for 24hr without fever-reducing medication and can consistently wear a well-fitted mask around others, they can discontinue isolation and wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days. Those who are not able to wear a mask (too young, developmental delays, eating at school, sleeping at daycare) or remain symptomatic must complete the full 10-day isolation. Regardless of symptoms, positive individuals should not participate in athletics, see high-risk individuals, or participate in activities with high risk of spread for 10 days.

If a patient >12 years old has significant symptoms for more than 4 days such as: fever >100.4F, muscle aches, lethargy, chest pain, shortness of breath, palpitations, dizziness, syncope, decrease in exercise tolerance, or non-ICU hospitalization, they should have an office visit after completing 10-day isolation for cardiac clearance before returning to physical activity.

How can I help my child feel better?

For most children, COVID-19 infection looks similar to the common cold or a stomach bug. Make sure your child stays hydrated and rests. Ibuprofen or acetaminophen can be used for fever or pain.

When should I call our pediatrician?

Call the office if your child:

Has fever >100.4F for more than 4 days

Refuses to drink fluids or has decreased urination (no urine for 6-8hr)

Has a bad cough or chest pain

Has any sign of difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

How should positive patients isolate?

Positive patients should isolate from COVID-19 negative household members if possible based on the patient's age or abilities and have one family member care for them in order to limit exposure. If multiple family members are positive, they can be together. Positive individuals should stay in their own bedroom and use a separate bathroom if possible. Ideally, positive individuals do not use shared spaces but if necessary then all household members should wear masks, keep >6 feet away, and limit time in this space.

What about other household members?

If other household members are asymptomatic, they should monitor for symptoms and use the following guidelines:

If fully vaccinated:*

Get tested 5 days after exposure and wear a mask outside of the home for 10 days

If unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated:*

Quarantine for 5 days, get tested 5 days after exposure, then mask for an additional 5 days outside of the home.

If the positive family member is unable to fully isolate from household contacts, there is continuous exposure to COVID-19. Household members must consider the isolation period part of their quarantine with the additional 5 days of quarantine to start after the isolation period ends.

If at any point in time a household contact develops symptoms they should isolate and test as they likely have COVID-19 as well.

If a patient has tested *negative* for COVID-19:

If a patient was tested due to:

Symptoms but NO exposure:

Patient can return to school/work when they have been fever-free for at least 24hr AND other symptoms have improved.

Exposure but NO symptoms:

If fully vaccinated*: No quarantine required but must wear a mask outside of the home for 10 days and should be tested 5 days after exposure.

If unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated*: Quarantine for 5 days after exposure followed by strict mask wearing for 5 days. If unable to wear a mask consistently, should quarantine for 10 days.

Exposure AND symptoms:

Must complete 10-day isolation unless symptoms resolve after Day 5 of isolation with a negative test, then need to wear a mask outside of the house for the remaining 5 days.

Should someone who has COVID-19 test again to clear isolation?

We do not recommend repeat testing at our office for those who have a positive rapid antigen test at home or after a positive PCR test. Someone with COVID-19 can continue to test positive although they are no longer contagious. The 10-day isolation period captures a healthy child's contagious window.

Sports Clearance for Athletes (12yr and older):

Asymptomatic or Mild COVID-19 (<4 days of fever 100.4F, <7 days lethargy/muscle aches):

If no chest pain, shortness of breath out of proportion to respiratory symptoms, palpitations, lightheadedness, or syncope can gradually return to activity if COVID-19 symptoms have resolved. Must complete 10-day isolation and be symptom-free to participate in organized sports and have completed 7-day gradual return to play.

Stage 1: Day 1 and Day 2 – (2 Days Minimum) – 15 minutes or less: Light activity (walking, jogging, stationary bike), intensity no greater than 70% of maximum heart rate. NO resistance training.

Stage 2: Day 3 – (1 Day Minimum) – 30 minutes or less: Add simple movement activities (eg. running drills) – intensity no greater than 80% of maximum heart rate.

Stage 3: Day 4 – (1 Day Minimum) – 45 minutes or less: Progress to more complex training – intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate. May add light resistance training.

Stage 4: Day 5 and Day 6 – (2 Days Minimum) – 60 minutes: Normal training activity – intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate.

Stage 5: Day 7 – Return to full activity/participation (ie, contests/competitions).

(Adapted from Elliott N, et al, infographic, British Journal of Sports Medicine, 2020; copied from AAP Policy statement)

If symptoms underlined above occur while returning to exercise or prior to exercising, please refrain from physical activity and schedule an office visit.

Moderate COVID-19 (>4 days of fever 100.4F, >7 days of lethargy/muscle aches, or non-ICU hospitalization):

Refrain from physical activity. Monitor for chest pain, shortness of breath out of proportion to respiratory symptoms, palpitations, lightheadedness, or syncope. Schedule office visit after 10-day isolation for cardiac clearance before return to activities.

My child has symptoms or has been exposed to COVID-19, how can I have them tested?

While we have increased our capacity for drive-up testing at our Mobile Care Site during the most recent surge, we do not have the ability to test every patient for COVID-19. At home rapid antigen tests, preferably taken daily for 2 days or every other day x2 while isolating, can be beneficial in identifying COVID-19 while someone is symptomatic but can be less accurate if someone is asymptomatic. Our openings for drive-up testing fill rapidly and the only way to schedule an appointment is through our [website](#) or Healow. We do have the ability to fax orders to Emerson Hospital for testing to be performed at their local urgent cares or their main testing site on Baker Avenue in Concord. For children in daycare with symptoms or a known exposure, Massachusetts provides [free drive-up PCR testing](#) in Tewksbury Monday through Saturday.

My child had COVID-19 recently and is now eligible for the booster vaccine, when can they get it?

Once a child is out of the 10-day isolation window, they can get their COVID-19 vaccine. This also applies for children between first and second dose of the primary series. We recommend using <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov> to find a vaccine appointment.

Definition of *"fully vaccinated" based on COVID-19 vaccine type and age:

Pfizer-BioNTech:

>18 years: >5 months after 2-dose series + booster or <5 months since 2-dose series
5-17 years: 2 weeks after 2-dose series

Moderna:

>18 years: >5 months after 2-dose series + booster or <5 months since 2-dose series

Johnson & Johnson:

>18 years: >2 months after first dose + booster or <2 months since first dose

We hope this guide has been helpful in answering your questions and providing education that our pediatricians would usually give over the phone. We look forward to expeditious responses to your phone calls and portal messages as call volumes return to more manageable levels. Your patience with our staff is much appreciated as they have been working diligently through this pandemic to give high quality care to our community.

Thank you for your understanding and we look forward to seeing you at your next visit!

-Acton Medical Associates Pediatricians