

WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD IS UNWELL

Last updated: October 19, 2020

Every child needs to be screened daily before going to daycare, using the Ontario School Screening Tool at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening>. The tool will guide whether or not the child can go to daycare that day and will provide next steps.

When a child is unwell

If you notice that the child has new or worsening symptoms, what you do depends on the symptom and how usual they are for the child. Use the following table to help guide your next steps:

Symptoms	Instructions
<p>If the child has ONE new or worsening symptom (that is not related to a known cause or condition) that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sore throat Stuffy nose/runny nose Headache Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise 	<p>Stay home for 24 hours to see if the symptom gets better or worse.</p> <p>Return to Daycare If symptoms are improving, child can return to daycare when well enough to do so without a COVID-19 test if they pass the Ontario School Screening Tool.</p> <p>If the symptom gets worse, or new symptoms appear, follow instructions in box below.</p>
<p>If the child has ONE new or worsening symptom that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever/chills Cough Shortness of breath Decreased or loss of smell or taste <p>OR</p> <p>If the child has TWO or MORE new or worsening symptoms (that are not related to a known cause or condition) that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sore throat Stuffy nose/runny nose Headache Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea Fatigue/lethargy/muscle aches/malaise 	<p>The child should isolate immediately and consider getting tested for COVID-19 OR talk with a doctor/health care provider to get assessed.</p> <p>Return to Daycare: No test: If you choose not to test the child, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the date their symptom(s) first appear. They may return to daycare after 10 days if they do not have a fever (without taking medication), and their symptoms are improving for 24 hours.</p> <p>If child gets an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider, they can return to daycare 24 hours after symptoms improve or as directed by the health care provider.</p> <p>Negative test: If the child receives a negative test result (they do not have COVID-19), they can return to daycare if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They do not have a fever (without using medication) It has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started improving They have not been told by public health to self-isolate <p>Positive test: If the child receives a positive test result (they have COVID-19):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWHU will contact the caregiver directly. The child must continue to self-isolate. The child can return to daycare only when cleared by NWHU. NWHU will also contact the daycare.
<p>A medical note or proof of test is not needed to return to daycare. Please Note: Child Care Centres may have additional policies on illness that must be followed.</p>	



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

www.nwhu.on.ca

How can I get tested? If the child has symptoms of COVID-19, visit <https://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/self-assessment.aspx> to find testing information for your community. Anyone tested must self-isolate while waiting for test results and cannot attend daycare. Test results may take 5-10 days to receive.

What if the child was sent home, but their symptoms are normal for them due to a chronic condition like allergies? Complete the screening tool online, and the child may attend daycare if they pass the screen. You should talk with the daycare so they know about chronic conditions that may seem like COVID-19 symptoms.

What if I think it is just a common cold? If a child has symptoms of a cold or the flu, then COVID-19 testing is recommended. A doctor or nurse practitioner won't be able to determine whether a child has COVID-19 without a test.

My child has a runny nose, what should I do? If the child's only symptom is a runny nose, you should keep them home and monitor their symptoms. When they feel better, they are ready to go back to daycare and no COVID-19 testing is needed. If they get worse or develop other symptoms, you should consider getting them tested. Mild symptoms known to persist in young children (e.g., runny nose) may be ongoing at time of return to daycare if other symptoms have been resolved.

If my child is unwell, do other household members also need to isolate while waiting for test results, or can siblings attend daycare and parents go to work? Currently the risk of COVID-19 is low in the region. Parents and siblings can attend daycare and go to work as long as they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and they have not been directed to isolate by NWHU.

If you have questions, please call the NWHU COVID-19 Hotline at 1-866-468-2240.