

North Shore Pediatrics Covid-19 School/Activities Policies

Hello NSP families,

We understand this continues to be a complicated time for many trying to navigate school and activities with concerns for Coronavirus. As kids return to school this fall the Massachusetts Department of Education has passed a statewide mask mandate for all K-12 students inside school buildings. **North Shore Pediatrics supports mask wearing for children in school at this time and will NOT write letters excusing children from wearing masks.** Our practice continues to support decisions made by the Department of Health, Department of Education and the Center for Disease Control.

The following are recommendations regarding attending school or activities from **Boston Children's Hospital** which we will follow:

If the child has any of the symptoms listed below they will likely need a negative COVID test before returning to school. The alternative is to remain at home in self-isolation for 10 days from symptoms onset.

- Fever (100.0 F or higher) chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- New Loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- ***Headache - when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea (3 or more loose stools in 24 hours)
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose

If there is high suspicion for COVID such as loss of taste and smell or fever and cough - recommendation is to isolate for 10 days from onset regardless of results.

Even with a negative COVID test – a child should not return to school until symptoms are improved.

Additional Notes:

- **We cannot go against school policies.**
- **REGARDING SIBLINGS/FAMILY MEMBERS** - If a patient is being tested for COVID, their siblings and parents should remain home until results are in.
- We **cannot** write a letter to “clear” a child to return to school or daycare. We **can** state the facts of their visit or their test results.
- We can order a Covid test for Lahey Urgent Care - results are coming back in 1-2 days. You can also get rapid testing at many sites listed [here on Mass.gov website](#). We cannot guarantee insurance will cover rapid testing although there are many **“Stop the Spread”** testing sites that are guaranteed to be covered.

REMINDER - IF A CHILD HAS HAD A CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID THEY MUST QUARANTINE FOR AT LEAST 10 DAYS FROM LAST EXPOSURE OR TEST 5 DAYS FROM EXPOSURE AND IF NEGATIVE CAN RETURN DAY 8.

COVID-19 Vaccination

We do not have Covid-19 vaccination available in the office for our patients as this time. We will follow the recommendations of the CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health with their [phases of vaccine rollout](#). We understand there are a lot of questions regarding vaccination and appreciate your patience as we continue to wait for availability and updates in eligibility criteria. We will do our best to keep our patients and families up-to-date with news.

Post-COVID Infection Cardiac Clearance for Athletes

We know how important sports are for kids. There have been [general guidelines](#) for best safe practices with play during this time of Covid. As we are further into this pandemic and learn more about Covid-19, there have been reports of cardiac effects after infection. This can occur even after mild infections. It has been [recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics](#) that individuals who test positive for Covid-19 should not exercise until they complete their quarantine, are symptom free and are evaluated by a physician. We ask that you be patient with this process as it is important!

The AAP has recommendations for return to play based on several factors including severity of symptoms, intensity of activity and past medical history. Any child over age 12 looking for return to physical activity will need to be seen in our office for an evaluation at least 10 days after their positive Covid-19 test if they have been completely asymptomatic. For patients that have had symptoms they will need to be seen in our office after they have been symptom free for at least 10 days. If a patient has more significant disease they may be referred to cardiology. If it is determined they are safe to return to play there is a [gradual return to play protocol](#) that is recommended that we will discuss at the appointment. If your child has tested positive for Covid please contact our office for further guidance.