

Overview of things you can do to help [prevent the spread](#) of respiratory viruses:

- Get vaccinated for [flu](#) and [COVID-19](#)
- Stay home when you are sick (follow the recommendations below)
- Use hand and respiratory [hygiene](#)
- Wear a [mask](#) around others
- Get [tested](#) for flu and COVID-19 so you can get [treated](#)
- Avoid crowded areas and maintain [physical distance](#)
- Increase [fresh air](#)

**Staff or students who have new, significant, symptoms of a respiratory virus such as cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, not explained by other causes: Allergies, lingering cough, etc., should stay home. Additionally, stay home when any of the following are present:**

- Fever above 100° F
- Student who is unable to easily manage their own secretions due to coughing or runny nose/eyes (able to manage when able to wear a mask and/or cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue or their inner elbow, not their hands.)
- Student who does not feel well enough to participate fully in classroom activities/play.
- Student who is unable to stay awake for the entire day due to not feeling well.
- Student who is not eating due to illness.
- You have tested positive for respiratory illness and have any of the above symptoms, consider staying home for 48-72 hours to help stop the spread of illness. If you have questions about how long to stay out, please contact the health office.

You should stay home even if you don't know what virus is making you sick.

## **When you start to feel better:**

You may begin to resume normal activities/school with precautions if:

1. You have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines; AND
2. Your other symptoms are improving

You may still be able to spread the virus that made you sick, even if you are feeling better.

**For at least the first 5 days after you resume normal activities, take these extra precautions:**

- Avoid crowded indoor spaces. Wear a mask anytime you are indoors around other people
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid spending time with people who are at [increased risk for severe disease](#)

## **If your symptoms get worse again:**

If your fever comes back or any other symptoms start to get worse, you should go back home until you are better again. Wait to resume normal activities until you have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines AND your symptoms are improving again. When you resume normal activities, take the recommended additional precautions during the next 5 days:

- Avoid crowded indoor spaces
- Wear a mask indoors around other people
- Wash your hands often
- Cover your coughs and sneezes

## **If you have tested positive for a respiratory virus but do not have any symptoms**

You can still spread the virus. Take additional precautions to protect others from getting sick.

### **For at least the first 5 days, take these extra precautions:**

- Avoid crowded indoor spaces. Wear a mask anytime you are indoors around other people.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid spending time with people who are at [increased risk for severe disease](#).
- Although not required, consider staying home for 48 - 72 hours which may help reduce the chances that you spread the virus to others. While you stay home you should:
  - Stay away from others in your household. Wear a mask when you have to be around them.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
  - Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.

- **Clean high-touch surfaces** (such as countertops, handrails, and doorknobs) often.

**If you develop any respiratory symptoms:**

**Then, take the recommended extra precautions during the next 5 days:**

- Avoid crowded indoor spaces
- Wear a mask indoors around other people
- Wash your hands often
- Cover your coughs and sneezes

If community levels of respiratory illness are deemed to be higher than expected, in conjunction with the public health department FRES may initiate, temporarily, a higher level of precautionary measures not limited to requiring those with symptoms or who test positive for respiratory illness to stay home for a period of *up to* 72 hours. These measures will be based on local public health data.

**If you were exposed to someone with a respiratory virus illness (exposure precautions)**

If you have been exposed to someone with a respiratory virus, you do not need to stay home as long as you remain asymptomatic. You may be able to spread a respiratory virus before developing symptoms. Follow the “prevent respiratory viruses” measures above.

# Protecting people with risk factors for severe illness from respiratory viruses

Be aware that some people around you may have risk factors for more severe disease. Masking, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and covering your coughs and sneezes helps protect them.

People at increased risk can include:

- Older adults
- Individuals with chronic underlying medical conditions, for example heart, lung, liver or kidney disease
- Young children, especially those under 2 years old
- People with weakened immune systems
- People with disabilities
- Pregnant people