

## **GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS ON RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING FOR SARS-COV-2 Aug. 3, 2021**

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has updated guidance on rapid antigen testing for Sars-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, [here](#). In addition, multiple rapid antigen tests are now approved for home use in asymptomatic individuals.<sup>1</sup>

### **What test should be used for routine screening of asymptomatic, unexposed individuals?**

Rapid antigen or PCR tests may be used. Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-19-like symptoms and no known exposure may be exempted from routine screening testing, if feasible. People who test positive should follow guidelines for isolation at the end of this letter.

### **What test should be used for testing of asymptomatic close contacts?**

Rapid antigen or PCR tests may be used. Fully vaccinated people should test 3-5 days after exposure. While awaiting results: Unvaccinated people should quarantine for 14 days. Fully vaccinated people do not need to quarantine but should wear a mask in indoor public spaces for 14 days. People who had a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the last 3 months do not need to quarantine or test as long as they remain asymptomatic. People who test positive should follow guidelines for isolation at the end of this letter

### **What test should be used for testing symptomatic individuals?**

PCR tests generally have greater sensitivity and are preferred due to automatic reporting to public health authorities. If an antigen test is used, Metro Health requests that the school reports results to us. *If an antigen test is negative in a symptomatic individual, PCR testing must be performed*, and the person should quarantine until results are known. People who test positive should follow guidelines for isolation at the end of this letter.

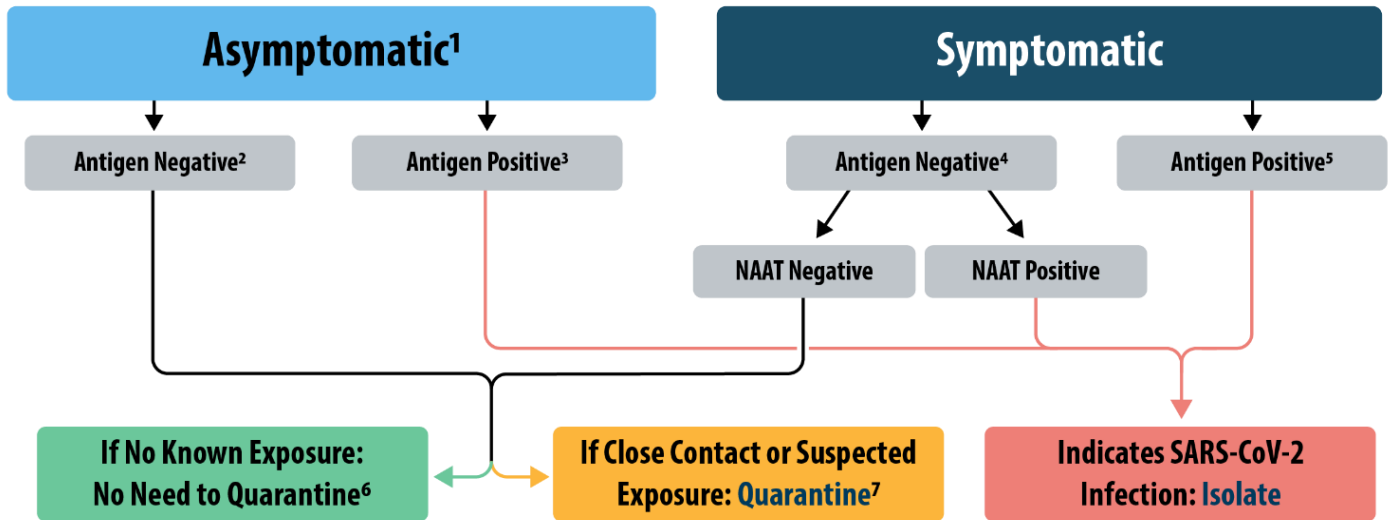
### **When is testing is not recommended?**

Do not retest individuals who have tested positive and do not have symptoms for COVID-19 for 3 months from their last positive test. Some individuals test persistently positive due to residual virus material but are unlikely to be infectious.

Testing should be offered on a voluntary basis. It is unethical and illegal to test someone who does not want to be tested, including students whose parents or guardians do not want them tested.

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<sup>1</sup> The following tests do not require a prescription or special app, however both require two swabs over two days for accuracy. A shortcoming is that results are not automatically reported to public health authorities: 1) BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card 2 Home Test—*must use version with EUA 210264*. Self-collected from individuals aged 15 years or older, or adult-collected from individuals aged two years or older. 2) Quickvue At-Home OTC COVID-19 Test—*must use version with EUA 210269*. Self-collected from individuals ages 14 years and older, or adult-collected from individuals ages 2 years and older.



1 Asymptomatic people who are fully vaccinated should follow CDC’s guidance on testing for fully vaccinated people. Asymptomatic people who have had a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the last 3 months should follow CDC’s guidance on testing for those within 90 days of their initial infection. For those who are traveling or have recently traveled, please refer to CDC’s guidance for domestic and international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 This antigen negative may need confirmatory testing if the person has a high likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., the person has had close contact with or suspected exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the last 14 days and the person is not fully vaccinated and has not had a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the last 3 months). Also see [Options to Reduce Quarantine](#).

3 This antigen positive may need confirmatory testing if the person has a low likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., the person has had no known or suspected exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the last 14 days or is fully vaccinated).

4 This antigen negative may not need confirmatory testing if the person has a low likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (see above).

5 This antigen positive may need confirmatory testing if the person has a low likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (see above).

6 For those who are traveling or have recently traveled, refer to CDC’s guidance for domestic and international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

7 Fully vaccinated people and those who have had a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the last 3 months do not need to quarantine. Others should consider serial antigen testing if they have had contact with a person who has COVID-19 within the last 14 days. For guidance on the use of antigen tests in ending quarantine, see CDC’s [Options to Reduce Quarantine](#).



### **For schools using laboratory-based tests under a CLIA waiver, what elements should an SOP include?**

- Policy for parental consent and student consent/assent
- Quality control process. This [CDC manual](#) for CLIA-waived testing has useful information and sample logs. (Note information on p. 8 about off-label use of waived tests; initial off-label antigen tests can be confirmed with PCR to verify proficiency and test performance. The patient should be quarantined while awaiting PCR result.)
- Facility considerations: Private space for testing
- Manufacturer instructions for specimen collection and test procedure
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Documentation and reporting requirements. Report all COVID-19 diagnostic and screening test results to the individual who was tested (consider how to provide a copy of result if patient is unable to use manufacturer's app), and report all positive *and negative* results to health departments in accordance with laboratory reporting requirements of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, [here](#). Note that 24 data elements must be reported for each test.
- Training and competency assessment
- Other key considerations are listed by CDC in *Appendix 2* [here](#). If testing is performed by school nurses, they **must** be provided with additional support, including staffing, PPE (minimum 2-week supply) and administrative support to meet extensive laboratory reporting requirements.

### **How should individuals with positive and negative results be managed?**

1. Symptomatic individuals
  - Positive, regardless of vaccination status: Isolate until [CDC criteria](#) are met for release.
  - Negative, unvaccinated: Continue to self-isolate for **10** days unless cleared by a medical provider, such as through a negative PCR test or alternative diagnosis.
  - Negative, vaccinated: Consult a healthcare provider, and do not return to work/school until afebrile for 24 hours
2. Asymptomatic close contacts
  - Positive, regardless of vaccination status: Isolate until [CDC criteria](#) are met for release.
  - Negative, vaccinated: May attend work/school. Wear a mask in indoor public spaces for 14 days
  - Negative, unvaccinated: Continue to self-quarantine for **14** days until end of incubation period.
3. Asymptomatic individuals who are NOT close contacts
  - Positive, regardless of vaccination status: Isolate until [CDC criteria](#) are met for release
  - Negative, regardless of vaccination status: May attend work/school. Universal masking is recommended in indoor public spaces.

### **For questions or to report a suspected case, please contact:**

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