

Frequently Asked COVID-19 Questions

Q: What is the Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) policy on face covering?

A: As of July 28, 2021, BCPS mandates use of face coverings for Students, Teachers and Staff in ALL school campuses. Masks wearing is also required on school buses.

Q: Who is considered a close contact of someone with COVID-19?

A: For COVID-19, close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*). An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, if they are asymptomatic, 2 days before their specimen that tested positive was collected), until they meet the criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

Q: What should an individual do while awaiting a COVID-19 test result?

A: It is recommended that individuals awaiting COVID-19 test results do not report to school or work until test results are known. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends these 3 Key steps while waiting for your COVID-19 test result

- ✓ Stay home and monitor your health.
- ✓ Think about the people who have recently been around.
- ✓ Answer the phone call from the health department.

Q: How many symptoms does a person need to have to be considered a suspected COVID-19 case?

A: Students exhibiting **one or more** COVID-like symptoms are considered suspect cases and should be immediately evaluated and tested for COVID-19. Schools should evaluate each symptomatic student to determine if this symptom is new or if it is part of an existing condition for the student. **See Return to school guidelines for Symptomatic Students.**

Q: Is it possible to have COVID-19 and the Flu at the same time?

A: Yes. It is possible to test positive for flu (as well as other respiratory infections) and COVID-19 at the same time. Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. **Testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis.**

Q: Can someone test negative and later test positive for COVID-19?

A: Yes, it is possible. You may test negative if the sample was collected early in your infection and test positive later during this illness. You could also be exposed to COVID-

19 after the test and get infected then. Even if you test negative, you still should take steps to protect yourself and others.

Q: Does mask wearing help determine if someone is considered a close contact?

A: No, a person is still considered a close contact even if one or both people wore a mask when they were together.

Q: What is the difference between seasonal allergies and COVID-19?

A: COVID-19 and seasonal allergies share many symptoms, but there are some key differences between the two. For example, COVID-19 can cause fever, which is not a common symptom of seasonal allergies. It may be difficult to tell the difference between them, and you may need to get a test to confirm your diagnosis.

Q: Do I need to wear a mask or avoid close contact if I am fully vaccinated?

A: Yes, the CDC recommends that vaccinated individuals wear masks indoors while in public to protect against the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others.

Q: If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a covid-19 vaccine?

A: Yes, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That's because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible-although rare-that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Q: Is it safe for my child to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Yes, studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Like adults, children may have some side effects after COVID-19 vaccination. These side effects may affect their ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Children 12 years and older are now eligible to get vaccinated against COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines have been used under the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, including studies in children 12 years and older. Your child cannot get COVID-19 from any COVID-19 vaccine.

Q: Can I get vaccinated against COVID-19 while I am currently sick with COVID-19?

A: No. People with COVID-19 who have symptoms should wait to be vaccinated until they have recovered from their illness and have met the criteria for discontinuing

isolation, those without symptoms should also wait until they meet the criteria before getting vaccinated. This guidance also applies to people who get COVID-19 before getting their second dose of vaccine.

Q. How long does protection from a COVID-19 vaccine last?

A: It is not known how long protection lasts for those who are vaccinated. What is known is that COVID-19 has caused very serious illness and death in a lot of people. If you get COVID-19, you also risk giving it to loved ones who may get very sick. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice.

Q: After receiving a Covid-19 vaccine, will I test positive for Covid-19 on a viral or on an antibody test?

A: COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current COVID-19 infection.

However, if your body develops an immune response to COVID-19, which is the goal of getting vaccinated, you may test positive on some COVID-19 antibody tests. Antibody tests show if you had a previous COVID-19 infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

On May 19, 2021, the FDA sent out an alert to tell people that antibody tests should not be used at this time to determine immunity or protection against COVID-19 at any time, and especially after a person has received a COVID-19 vaccination.

Q: Can you still get Covid-19 if you are vaccinated?

A: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also continues to recommend vaccinated people with symptoms get tested for COVID-19 and wear a mask. The COVID-19 vaccine help prevent hospitalization and death if you contract the virus. Cases of fully vaccinated individuals contracting coronavirus are rare, but possible.

Q: Can an individual receive the COVID-19 vaccine along with other vaccines?

A: The CDC recommends that it is OK to take the COVID-19 vaccine along with other vaccines.

COVID-19 Testing in Schools

Q: What are the CDC recommendations for COVID-19 testing in schools?

A: The CDC has identified screening testing as an important prevention strategy for schools, as it helps identify people- including those with or without symptoms- who may be contagious, so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission of the

coronavirus. Testing in schools gives schools and families added assurance that schools can remain open safely for all students.

Q: Is the Cue- Rapid COVID-19 test a deep nasal swab?

A: No, the Cue Rapid test swabs the inner part of the lower nostril. The test is not painful. We do not use the longer swabs that reach higher in the nose.

Q: Is the COVID-19 test mandatory?

A: No, it is a voluntary test with written and verbal parental consent.

Q: Which test is administered in BCPS schools and where will the test be done?

A: The Cue Rapid test will be administered in schools utilizing a phase to students with symptoms who are referred to the isolation room.

Q: Who will be administering COVID-19 testing in schools?

A: Trained School Nurses will be administering COVID-19 testing in schools.

Q: How long does it take for results?

A: The results of the test should be available within 20 minutes.

Q: Is the Cue rapid Test FDA and EUA approved?

A: Yes, the Cue Rapid Test has received an Emergency use Authorization (EUA) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Q: Who is paying for the Cue Rapid Test in schools?

A: The Florida Department of Health has allocated funds through grants to cover the costs of testing in schools. The COVID-19 test will be free for students.

Q: When do we start testing in schools?

A: Testing in schools will utilize a phase-in approach during the month of September.

Q: Is Surveillance testing mandatory? Which groups are being tested and the frequency of testing?

A: No, it is not mandatory. Surveillance testing will be provided by the Department of Health (DOH) for selected sports teams, bands and chorus and the frequency will be determined by DOH.

Q: Does the Cue Rapid Swab contain ethylene oxide?

A: As part of the CUE nasal swab production process, ethylene oxide (EO) is used to sterilize the swab like most plastic sterile medical devices. There is zero residue from this process, and they are hypoallergenic.

Generally speaking, EO is one of the most accepted safe forms of sterilization for medical equipment, pharmaceutical packaging (swabs, tubes, bottles), devices, etc. For Cue nasal swabs, industry validated procedures for EO sterilization via Puritain, which is the largest swab maker in the US. The validated procedure for sterilization includes a de-gasing phase that ensures the final sterilized product is within acceptable limits for EO.

For further information please visit:

Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Department of Health Broward

<http://broward.floridahealth.gov/>