

# COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

## Update: New Testing Guidance, New School Screening Guidance

October 2, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

An Update from Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health

*Please share with staff*

### New COVID-19 Testing Guidance

- Ontario has new [Guidance on Testing and Clearing Cases](#).
- **Changes include:**
  - Moving from a 14-day clearance period for cases to a 10-day clearance for majority of cases with mild to moderate illness; a 20-day clearance for cases with severe illness.
  - Contacts with high-risk exposure **must self-isolate for 14 days from their last exposure**.
- Also refer to the most-updated version of the [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance](#).

### New School Screening Guidance

- Effective Oct 2, Ontario has a new School Screening Tool for COVID-19. [See attached PDF](#).
- **Emphasis on 'new or worsening' symptoms, and differentiating between the most common symptoms vs. 'other' symptoms.**
- Changes include:
  - Two sets of questions for parents/caregivers to screen their school-aged child.
  - The first set of questions asks about common symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath and loss of taste/smell.
    - **Having even one of these symptoms** results in direction to stay home until a negative COVID-19 test result, or a consultation with a health care provider for an alternate diagnosis (i.e. chronic or recurring symptoms, or reasonable alternate explanation for symptoms).
  - The second set of questions is for 'other' symptoms of COVID-19, such as headache, fatigue, runny/stuffy/congested nose, etc.
    - **Only one symptom** will result in direction to stay home for 24 hours and return to school or child care once symptoms are improving.
    - **Two or more symptoms** will result in direction to stay home until a negative COVID-19 test result or a consultation with a health care provider.
- **Please continue to remind your patients that a health care provider cannot differentiate between the common cold and COVID-19 without a test.**