

New school year

Preparing for COVID-19

Information for parents and carers



This resource aims to support parents and carers if someone in their family tests positive to COVID-19.

How can I prepare for COVID-19 cases at home?

Your COVID-19 home kit should include basic hydration solutions (such as hydralyte), a thermometer, pain relief, regular medication, cleaning products, tissues, face masks and gloves. Have a plan for getting food and essentials for up to two weeks.

Symptoms and testing for COVID-19 in children

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalisation. Some symptoms of COVID-19 in children can include:

- fever
- fatigue
- cough
- runny nose
- sore throat
- loss or altered sense of smell or taste
- loss of appetite
- irritability.

Less common symptoms include:

- headache
- breathing difficulties
- vomiting and diarrhoea
- poor oral intake and mild dehydration.

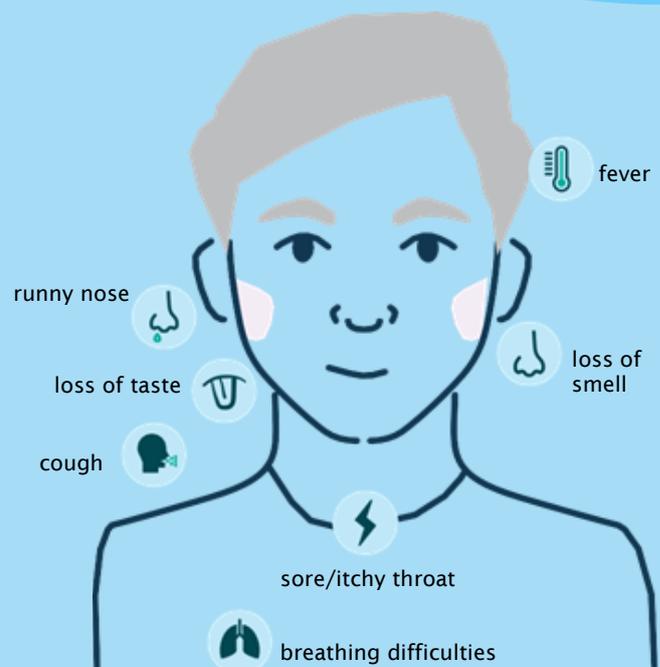
Serious symptoms include:

- difficulty breathing
- very sleepy (for example, difficult to wake or confused)
- very dehydrated (for example, less wet nappies, going to the toilet less than usual or feeling very thirsty)
- chest or abdominal pain
- persistent dizziness or headache

- fever that lasts more than five days, or fever in a baby under three months old
- pain or swelling in the legs

If your child is unwell, please keep them home from school and get them tested for COVID-19. Your child must stay at home while you wait for your results. They must not go to school or attend other social gatherings. Refer below for what to do if they test positive to COVID-19.

If your child develops any of the serious symptoms listed above, their symptoms get worse or you feel like it is an emergency, call triple zero (000) or go straight to the hospital. Make sure you tell them they have COVID-19.



What to do if you or your child tests positive for COVID-19

If you or your child returns a positive test you must notify your test result via the online declaration form, which can be found at [coronavirus.tas.gov.au](https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au). This is required under the *Public Health Act 1997* and ensures you can access the care and support you need and financial assistance if eligible.

The family member who has tested positive must isolate at home or in private accommodation for at least seven days.

If COVID positive or a close contact, do not go out in public, to work, the shops, school or childcare, and do not visit anyone or have visitors to your house.

Close contacts are:

- anyone who lives in your house
- anyone who has visited your home for more than four hours over a 24 hour period
- if you have visited another household for more than four hours, all members of that household are close contacts.
- someone that has spent four hours at the same site, workplace or venue as a case during a significant transmission event.

You must also tell your social contacts that you have tested positive for COVID-19. Social contacts are people you have had 15 minutes of face-to-face contact with or spent two hours with in the same indoor space. They are not people from home, your workplace or school.

If you or your child attended school, childcare or an early childhood service while infectious, you must let them know you have tested positive. The facility will tell other students and staff who are education contacts.

The COVID@home care team are available for advice and support for anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19. You can call them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, on 1800 973 363.

If your child's symptoms worsen, call your doctor or the COVID@home care team.

How to protect your household if someone tests positive

If a member of the household or family is at risk of moderate or severe illness from COVID-19, it is best if they (or you) can stay elsewhere while there is a family member in isolation.

If members of the household or family are not at risk of severe illness, you should:

- Stay apart as much as possible. If possible, sleep in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom.
- If you must be in the same room, be as quick as possible, try to keep at least 1.5 metres away and wear a face mask.
- Do not share household items.
- Ensure everyone washes their hands often and covers their coughs and sneezes.
- Clean high touch surfaces.
- Put used face masks, tissues and other rubbish straight into a bin.
- Keep living spaces well ventilated by opening windows and doors as much as possible

How will your child be kept safe at school?

COVID-19 safety measures are in place across all education sites in line with Public Health advice. These measures include:

- ensuring all staff, including volunteers and contractors, have been vaccinated against COVID-19
- encouraging all families to have their children aged 5 years and older vaccinated
- face masks will be worn by adults, however teachers may remove their masks if required to assist clear communication when teaching
- face masks will be worn by all secondary school students
- open windows and air purifiers in classrooms
- use of outdoor learning areas
- increased hygiene practices and abiding by physical distancing and density requirements
- continuing increased COVID-safe cleaning practices
- supporting students with a disability and who are vulnerable by working with parents and carers
- regularly review COVID safety plans
- limiting mixing of students and staff where possible
- ensuring staff, students and community members stay home if they are sick and get tested if they have symptoms.

How cases will be managed at school?

The safety of our students is our first priority. Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) will be given to students to use if they have COVID-19 symptoms. If your child is unwell, please stay at home and get tested using the RAT provided by our school. If the result is negative, and your child is feeling well, they can return to school. If positive, let us know, keep your child at home and advise Public Health. If your child needs to isolate at home, their learning will be supported online. Public Health will work closely with schools if there are increased cases in classes.

How can I stay informed?

For information about COVID safety in schools, visit education.tas.gov.au/COVID-19

For information about COVID-19 in Tasmania, go to coronavirus.tas.gov.au or call the Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.

For information about COVID-19 in Australia, go to health.gov.au or call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080