
School Guidance for Respiratory Viral Illnesses:

April 1, 2024

On March 1, 2024, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued new guidelines related to respiratory viruses. While COVID-19 is no longer considered a Public Health Emergency, this guidance is being shared to provide practical recommendations and information to help lower our population's risk from the health impacts of a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, including COVID-19, influenza (flu), and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). As it relates to COVID-19, these updated Respiratory Virus Guidelines recommend staying home until symptoms have improved overall **and** a fever has resolved without the use of a fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.

After returning from illness, people are encouraged to keep preventing the transmission of sickness by:

- Core Prevention Strategies:
 - Staying up to date with recommended vaccines.
 - Continuing to practice good handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and often clean high-touched surfaces.
 - Opening windows and doors to increase ventilation or purify indoor air, when possible.
 - Getting tested for flu and COVID-19 to receive appropriate antiviral medication to prevent severe illness.
- Additional Prevention Strategies:
 - Maintaining social distancing and wearing a well-fitting mask for five days to protect those most at risk for severe illness.

At this time, it is recommended that schools follow the updated [CDC Respiratory Virus Guidance](#) in the management of all upper respiratory viruses including COVID-19, flu, and RSV. It's recommended that these guidelines be used in conjunction with the [Managing Communicable Diseases in Schools](#) guide from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, as well as guidance from their local health department whenever needed. This updated guidance removes any specific language regarding recommendations to close contacts of COVID-19.

For questions, please call the Grand Traverse County Health Department communicable disease line at 231-995-6125.