

Rangeley Lakes Regional School



Fall of 2023

Return to School Plan

SCHOOL NURSE/RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

Taken directly from CDC's Updated Respiratory Virus Guidance: What to Do When You Are Sick March 2024 and can be found [here](#)

CDC released updated Respiratory Virus Guidance in response to the decreasing risk that COVID-19 poses to the population. This updated Guidance includes strategies to protect people at highest risk of getting seriously ill and provides actionable recommendations for people with common viral respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, flu, and RSV.

Current Respiratory Guidelines (reviewed 3/11/24)

Protect Yourself from Getting Sick:

The most important thing you can do to protect yourself from COVID-19, flu, and RSV is to stay up to date on your recommended vaccines. Even when vaccines don't prevent infection, they often tame these viruses, reducing severity, and preventing their worst outcomes, like hospitalization and death. Along with staying up-to-date on your vaccines, practicing good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes, washing or sanitizing your hands often, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces can help. Also, taking steps for cleaner air can help reduce the spread of respiratory viruses. This can mean bringing in fresh outside air by opening a window, purifying indoor air, or having outdoor social activities.

If You Get Sick:

Even if you practice these *core prevention* strategies, you may still catch a virus and develop respiratory symptoms. If that happens, the updated Guidance recommends two actions:

- **Step 1:** Stay at home. As much as possible, you should stay home and away from others until at least 24 hours after both:
 1. Your symptoms are getting better overall, and
 2. You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).

This advice is similar to what has been recommended for flu for decades and will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses during the most contagious period after infection. Not all respiratory virus infections result in a fever, so paying attention to other symptoms (cough, muscle aches, etc.) is important as you determine when you are well enough to leave home. If your symptoms are getting better, and stay better for 24 hours, you are less likely to pass your infection to others and you can start getting back to your daily routine and move on to step 2.

- **Step 2:** Resume normal activities, and use added prevention strategies over the next five days, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing your hygiene practices,

wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses. People can choose to use these prevention strategies at any time.

Since some people remain contagious beyond the “stay-at-home” period, taking added precautions can lower the chance of spreading respiratory viruses to others.

People who are at higher risk for severe illness who start to feel sick should seek health care right away so that they can access testing and/or treatment. Early treatment for COVID-19 or flu may prevent severe disease in people at higher risk, even if they are up to date with their vaccines.