

# Respiratory Illnesses: Flu, COVID-19, RSV

HVHD's School Recommendations

September 18, 2023





# What is Respiratory Illness Season?

According to [CDC](#), "it is common to get sick from respiratory viruses such as [COVID-19](#), [flu](#), and [respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\)](#), especially in the **fall** and **winter**. There are actions you can take to protect yourself and others."

# Flu vs. RSV vs. COVID-19

## Flu

Experience symptoms from **1-4** days after infection

Contagious first **3-4 days** of illness; potentially **1 day before** showing symptoms

## COVID-19

Experience symptoms from **2-5** days and **up to 14 days** after infection

Contagious for about **8 days after** symptoms begin; potentially **2-3 days before** symptoms begin

## RSV

Experience symptoms **4-6** days after infection

Contagious first **3-8 days** of illness; potentially **1-2 days before** showing symptoms

Vaccine available for people **ages 60 and older**

Stay **up to date** with vaccinations

Spread from person to person between people who are near or in close contact with one another

Stay home if you are sick

# HVHD Recommendations for Schools: Respiratory Illnesses



Everyone **6 months of age and older** are encouraged to get vaccinated for COVID-19 and flu



**Stay home** when sick with fever or respiratory symptoms



**Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette** (cover your mouth and nose with elbow) to prevent spread



Consider wearing a mask when sick/coughing from **ANY illness** to prevent the spread



If you have been exposed but are well, you **CAN** attend work or school



Seek care and/or testing if you are not improving or if you are someone who may benefit from antiviral treatment for flu or COVID-19

## COVID-19 Specific Guidance



If you test positive, CDC recommends **isolating for days 1-5**, followed by **masking for 5 days** (days 6-10)



“Day 0” is the day you were tested



“Day 1” is the first full day following the day you were tested

## Other Viral Respiratory Diseases: Isolation



Individual is fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medications



Feeling well enough to be in school

# HVHD Recommendations for Schools: Respiratory Illnesses (cont.)



CT DPH continues to recommend that schools follow the recommendations of *American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)* pertaining to school buildings, specifically considerations for fresh air supplied to indoor spaces, filtration of recirculated air, and maintenance and monitoring conditions



All outbreaks (schools, long-term care facilities, daycare, etc) must be **reported immediately as a Category 1** online to HVHD and by telephone to CT DPH (860-509-7794 weekdays; 860-509-8000 weekends/holidays)

# What is Influenza (Flu)?

**Influenza (flu)** is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

The flu can **spread** by tiny droplets when:

- An infected person coughs or sneezes
- You get virus droplets from a cough or sneeze in your eyes, nose, or mouth
- You touch a surface that has the virus on it, like a doorknob, and then touch your face before washing your hands



# Flu: Prevention



Get your **annual flu vaccine** to reduce the burden of flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and death



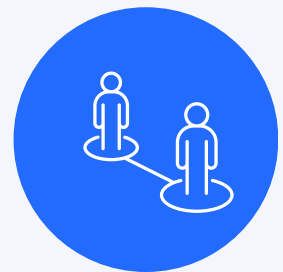
**Stay home** if you are feeling sick



**Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue** or your shirt sleeve, not your hands



**Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



**Avoid close contact** with others, such as kissing, shaking hands, and sharing cups and eating utensils

# Flu: Symptoms

The time from when a person is exposed and infected with flu to when symptoms begin is about **two days**, but can range from about **one to four days**. People with the flu are most **contagious** in the first **3-4 days** after their illness begins.



Runny or stuffy nose



Fever



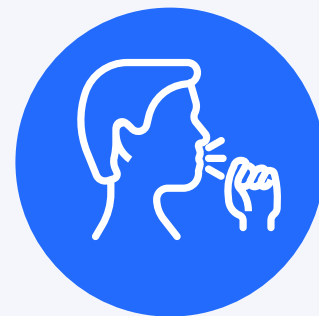
Fatigue



Sore throat



Body aches



Coughing



Headache



# Flu: Care



**Manage fever and pain** with over-the-counter fever reducers and pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. (Never give aspirin to children.)



**Drink enough fluids.** It is important for people with RSV infection to drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration (loss of body fluids).



If you get sick with flu, **influenza antiviral drugs** may be a treatment option. Antiviral drugs work best when started early, such as one to two days after your flu symptoms begin.

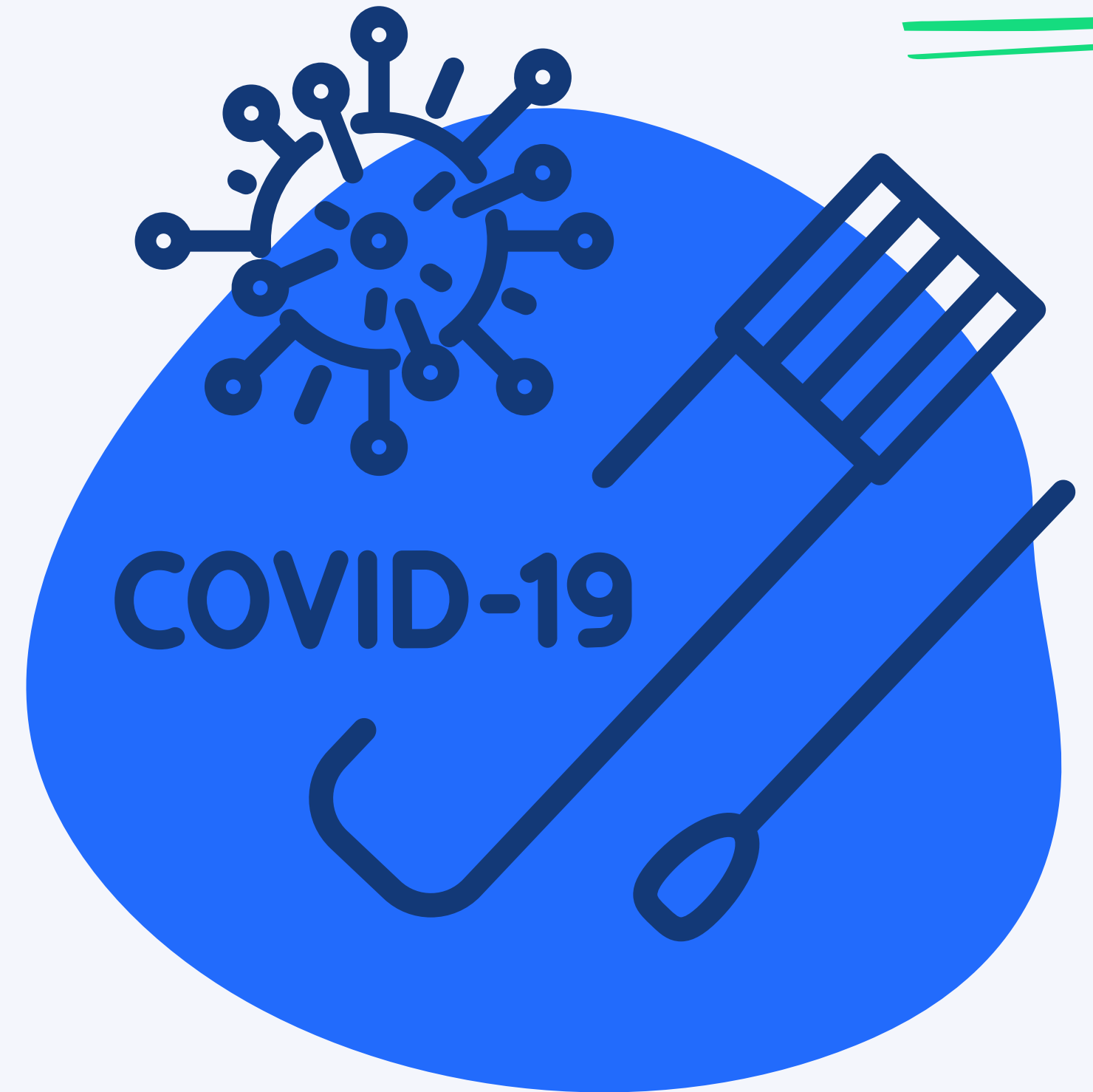
Check with your doctor promptly if you are at higher risk of serious flu complications and you get flu symptoms. People at higher risk of flu complications include young children, adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant people, and people with certain medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

# What is COVID-19?

**COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019)** is a disease caused by a virus named SARS-CoV-2. It can be very contagious and spreads quickly. Over one million people have died from COVID-19 in the United States. COVID-19 most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, the flu, or pneumonia. COVID-19 may attack more than your lungs and respiratory system.

COVID-19 can **spread** when:

- An infected person breaths out droplets, coughs, or sneezes
- You have direct contact with the virus
- You touch a surface that has the virus on it, like a doorknob, and then touch your face before washing your hands



# COVID-19: Prevention

## Prevention Actions to Use at All COVID-19 Community Levels:



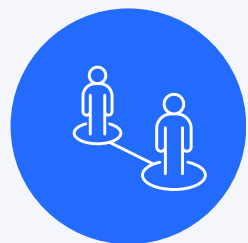
**Stay home** if you are feeling sick



**Stay up to date** with COVID-19 vaccines



**Improve ventilation** in closed spaces



**Avoid close contact** with people who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19

## Prevention Actions to Add as Needed:



**Consider wearing a mask** when sick/coughing



**Increase space and distance** in crowded spaces

# COVID-19: Symptoms

People infected with COVID-19 usually show symptoms within **2-14 days** after exposure to the virus. People infected with COVID-19 are usually **contagious for 5 to 10 days** and should wear a mask through day 10.



Fever or chills



Fatigue



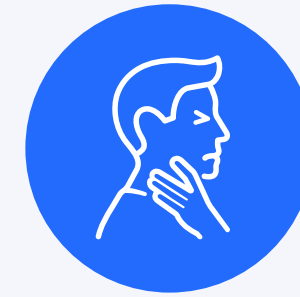
New loss of taste or smell



Cough



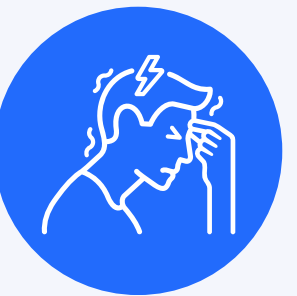
Muscle or body aches



Sore throat



Shortness of breath/  
difficulty breathing



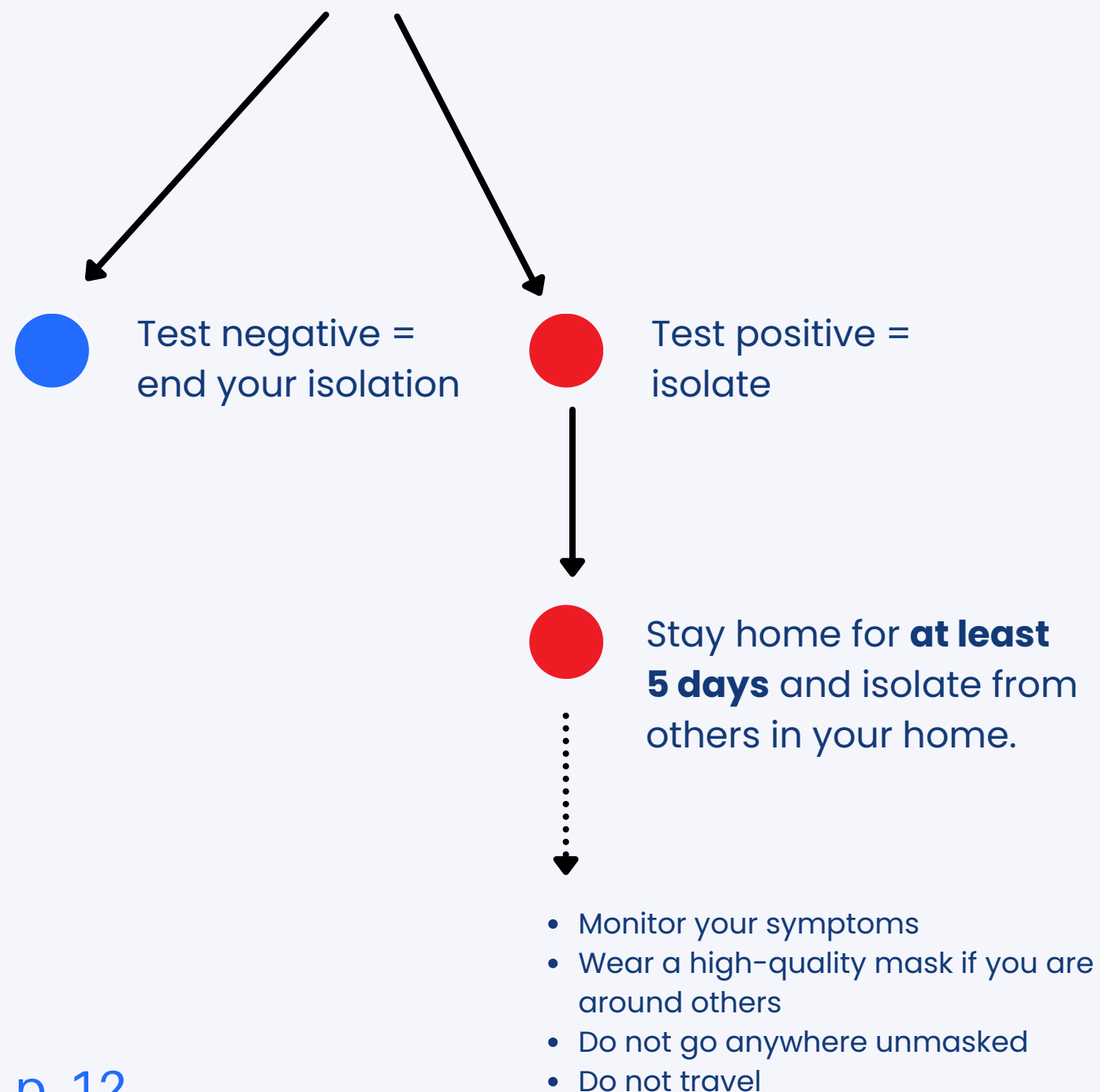
Headache



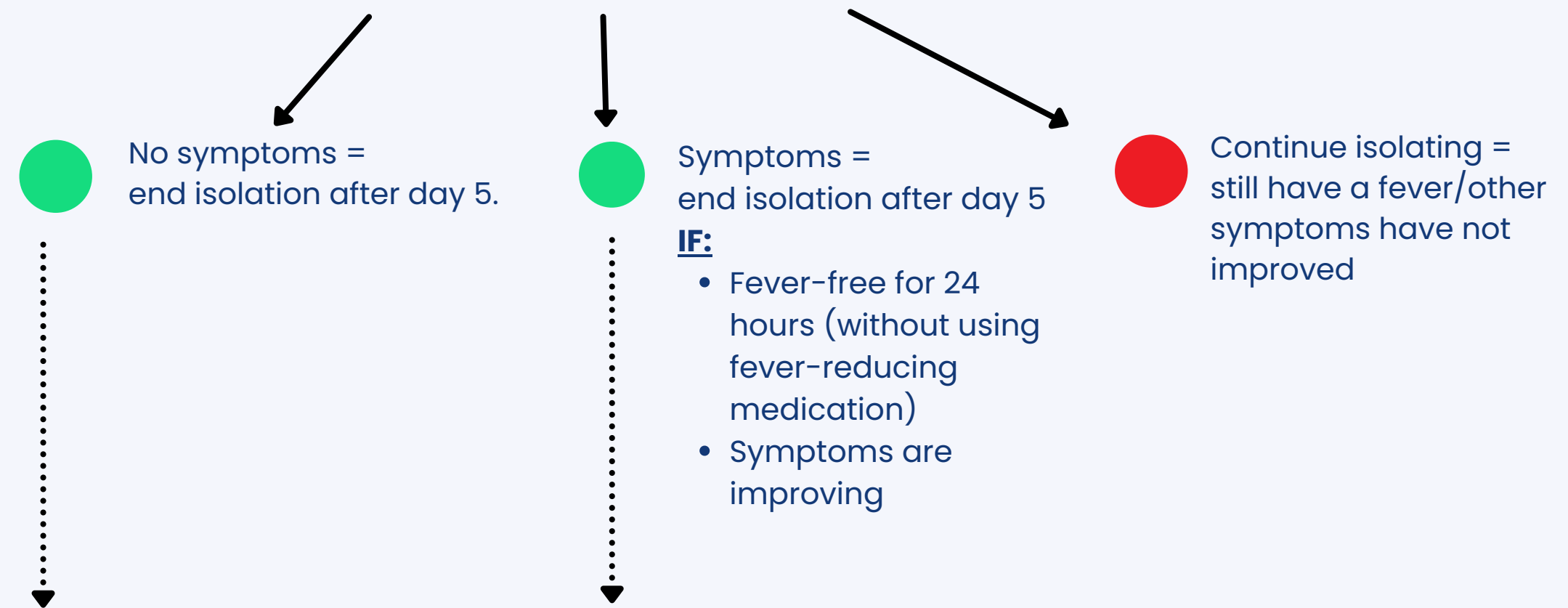
Nausea, vomiting, or  
diarrhea

# COVID-19 Care: When to Isolate & When to End Isolation

## WHEN TO ISOLATE:



## WHEN TO END ISOLATION:



Wear a mask around others through **day 10**

**OR**



With **two** sequential negative tests **48 hours apart**, you may remove your mask sooner than day 10.

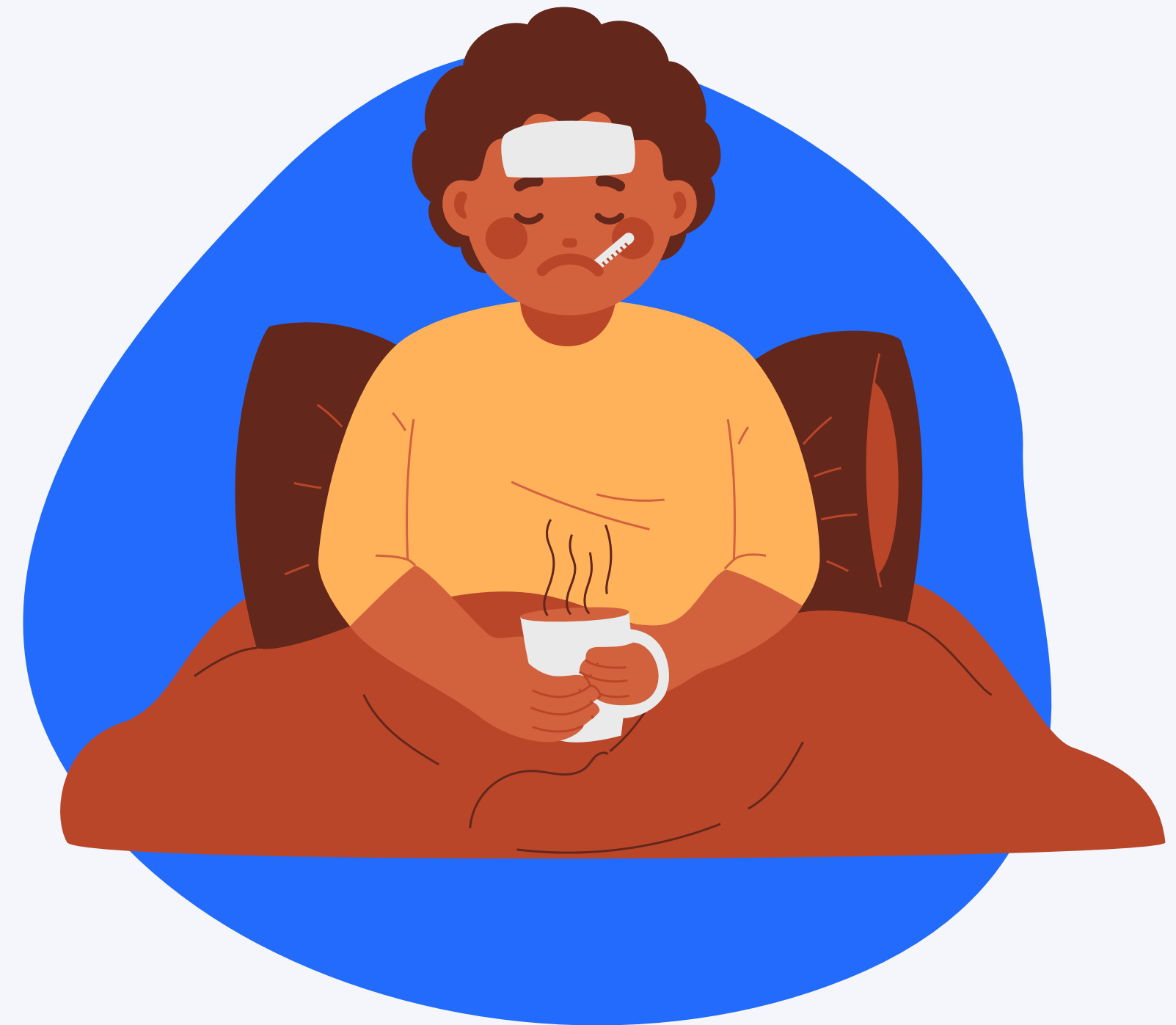
**\*If your antigen test results are positive, continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test. Continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until you have two sequential negative results.**

# What is RSV?

**Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious. Infants and older adults are more likely to develop severe RSV and need hospitalization.

RSV can **spread** when:

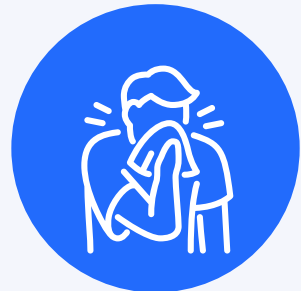
- An infected person coughs or sneezes
- You get virus droplets from a cough or sneeze in your eyes, nose, or mouth
- You have direct contact with the virus, like kissing the face of a child with RSV
- You touch a surface that has the virus on it, like a doorknob, and then touch your face before washing your hands



# RSV: Prevention



**Stay home** if you are feeling sick



**Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue** or your shirt sleeve, not your hands



**Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



**Avoid close contact** with others, such as kissing, shaking hands, and sharing cups and eating utensils

# RSV: Prevention (cont.)



RSV vaccine helps protect **adults 60 years and older** from RSV disease. If you are 60 years and older, talk to your healthcare provider to see if RSV vaccination is right for you. Two vaccines available (Arexvy - GSK and Abrysvo - Pfizer)



Two monoclonal antibody products – nirsevimab (Beyfortus) and palivizumab (Synagis) – can help protect babies and young children from severe disease from an RSV infection.

CDC recommends all children younger than 8 months receive nirsevimab to protect them in their first RSV season. If your child is at increased risk for severe RSV disease, talk to their doctor to determine if additional doses of monoclonal antibodies are recommended for your child (aged 8 to 19 months) as they enter their second RSV season.



# RSV: Symptoms

People infected with RSV usually show symptoms within **4-6 days** after getting infected. People infected with RSV are usually **contagious for 3 to 8 days** and may become contagious a day or two before they start showing signs of illness.



Runny nose



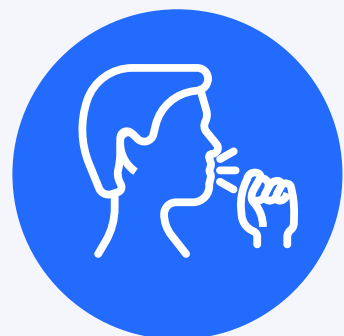
Sneezing



Decrease in appetite



Fever



Coughing



Wheezing

# RSV: Care

Most RSV infections go away on their own in a week or two, however, RSV can cause severe illness in some people.



**Manage fever and pain** with over-the-counter fever reducers and pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. (Never give aspirin to children.)




**Drink enough fluids.** It is important for people with RSV infection to drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration (loss of body fluids).



**Talk to your healthcare provider** before giving your child nonprescription cold medicines. Some medicines contain ingredients that are not good for children.



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