

Update on Screening Students From the SVCS Corporation Nurse:

Parents Guardians of SVCS Students:

The most current version of the Parent Screening Tool from the ISDH was sent out at the beginning of the school year. It accompanied our plea to have families screen their children every day prior to sending them to school. The tool has been revised by the state a few times since the beginning of the school year. The main thing to consider is that on every screening tool, it has been advised that you keep your child home if they are experiencing any symptom that is listed. It does not state to keep them home only if they have a fever and a listed symptom. It does not state to only keep them home if they have two or more symptoms. The wording states to keep a child home for ANY symptom that could be COVID-related and to seek attention from your physician or seek testing.

Below are the COVID symptoms listed on the CDC website and updated as of 12/22/2020. It states it is not an all-inclusive list and neither is the ISDH screening tool. If there's anything we've learned, it is that COVID is not predictable, and it does not present the same way in any two people, even in a family.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

The screening tool states to stay home if a person has a temperature 100.4 F or higher (or lower per school board policy). South Vermillion's rule for when to keep a child home prior to COVID is 100 degrees F. The textbook definition of a fever is 100.4 degrees or above. However, even different articles seem to differ on what the definition of a legitimate "fever" is. 100.4 degrees F or higher would be the threshold for when someone needs to be seen by a doctor or tested for COVID, if fever is their only symptom.

The SVCS Nursing Staff utilizes a common sense approach and acknowledge that sometimes kids just don't feel good and get run down. If a child doesn't feel well and has a low-grade temperature (in the 99-degree range), but they do not have any other specific symptoms per the screening tool and have no known COVID contact, the nurses have allowed the child to stay home for a day or two and monitor for any specific COVID symptoms. If they do not develop any other symptoms to indicate any contagious illness, then they have been cleared to return to school once their temperature returns back to normal and they feel better for 24 hours without being seen or tested.

Also, our nurses have been encouraged to speak with the families and see what is normal for the child. Congestion/runny nose isn't on the ISDH list, but if there is a student that has cold-like symptoms that weren't normal, it is encouraged that the family have the child tested. We have had instances that the child has ended up being positive for COVID with continued lingering issues as a result of the virus. Several staff members have also had only cold-like symptoms without a fever (runny nose, congestion) and ended up testing positive. However, this symptom is a delicate issue because some people have allergies that present at certain, predictable times of the year. The ISDH initially had congestion/runny nose on their list, but then removed the symptom during the Fall because there were so many people complaining that students with allergies were missing school due to having a runny nose with a known history of allergies. The state has encouraged school health officials to speak with our families, consider our students and what is their norm, and to see if the family has had any known exposure to COVID or has attended or participated in high-risk activities.

A lot of the symptoms are the same and a fever is not required for a student to be sent home. Please review this too, as I had given it out to the school nurses to follow to have consistency among our schools.

It is our hope this helps shed some light on what guidance we are working with while trying balance the desire to reduce the amount of time students are out of school while ensuring they are healthy and non-infectious when they return. Thank you.

Hannah Hoover, RN
SVCS Corporation Nurse