



Renfrew County and District Health Unit  
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

## For Immediate Release

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(Pembroke, Ontario, 8:30 a.m. October 2, 2020)

### **RCDHU Update on the COVID-19 School and Childcare Screening Tool**

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Ministry of Health released updated guidelines on COVID-19 and possible COVID-19 symptoms. In order to avoid putting an impossible demand on Family Physician's Offices and on the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (VTAC), Dr. Robert Cushman, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU), and Dr. Jonathan Fitzsimon, Clinical Coordinator, VTAC, are providing additional health advice for residents to follow in the event that you or your children become unwell with symptoms that may be related to COVID-19.

The new Ontario screening tool has been updated to help parents make informed decisions about whether their children should attend school or childcare, need to consult a health care provider, or get tested for COVID-19. Updates include separation of Major symptoms in Question 1 and Minor symptoms in Question 2 and **no longer includes** abdominal pain or conjunctivitis (pink eye).

If a person has **just 1 Minor symptom**, they should stay home for 24 hours to be monitored to see whether the symptoms improve or worsen. If they start to feel better and symptoms are improving, they can return to school and/or childcare when well enough to do so, and **no COVID-19 testing is needed**.

If a person has **2 or more Minor symptoms** listed in Question 2 (Sore throat, runny nose, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or fatigue) then **you WILL need a COVID-19 test and should self-isolate**. You can call VTAC at 1-844-727-6404 to schedule a COVID-19 test.

If a person has a **Major symptom** listed in Question 1 (Fever, Cough, Shortness of breath, Loss of taste/smell) then **you WILL need a COVID-19 test and should self-isolate**. You can call VTAC at 1-844-727-6404 to schedule a COVID-19 test.

However, if you are concerned about how sick you or your child is, then you should call your Family Physician. If you do not have a Family Physician or cannot access your Family Physician, then call VTAC at 1-844-727-6404 to schedule a telephone appointment with a VTAC Family Physician. As always, if you feel that you or your child is seriously ill, then call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

**If your child is currently home under the conditions identified above and will now pass the revised screening tool, they may return to school tomorrow.**

It is also imperative that everyone do their part to stay home if they are sick. It is important that parents monitor a child's illness and keep them out of school or daycare if they are sick, and adults should stay off work if they are sick - as you would with any other illness such as the flu. RCDHU is reminding all residents to complete the COVID-19 [self-assessment tool](#) or COVID-19 [school and childcare screening tool](#) daily before going to work, school or daycare, to monitor for symptoms and proper guidance.

For more information, visit RCDHU's website at <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/> or call 613-735-8654 or 1-800-267-1097.

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