

Public Health



Prevent • Promote • Protect

Sauk County Public Health

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Issued by the following organizations:

Sauk County Public Health
Sauk Prairie Healthcare
Reedsburg Area Medical Center
SSM Health/St. Clare Hospital-Baraboo
Baraboo School District
Community Christian School of Baraboo
St. Joseph School of Baraboo
School District of Reedsburg
Sacred Heart School of Reedsburg
River Valley School District
Sauk Prairie School District
St. Aloysius School of Sauk City
Weston School District
School District of Wisconsin Dells

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THE GOLD STANDARD FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE CONTACTS OF A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE IS TO QUARANTINE FOR 14 FULL DAYS AFTER EXPOSURE

The recommendation for close contacts of a person with COVID-19 to quarantine for a full 14 days after exposure has been, and continues to be, the safest option to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Quarantine helps limit further spread of COVID-19, as someone can unknowingly spread COVID-19 before symptoms develop.

Recently, the CDC and WI DHS have released two alternative strategies to shorten this quarantine period for close contacts. These new strategies are:

1. Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing IF no symptoms develop during daily monitoring. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through Day 14.
2. Quarantine can end after Day 7 ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test collected on Day 6 or 7 is negative AND if no symptoms have developed. This test-based strategy for shortening quarantine is a change from previous CDC and WI DHS guidance that quarantine should continue for 14 days regardless of a test result.

Daily symptom monitoring must continue through Day 14. For this strategy to work, a negative test result must be received; **a pending test result on Day 7 is not sufficient.** Sauk County Public Health recognizes that the timely return of COVID-19 test results from labs will be a barrier to utilizing this second option for Sauk County residents. It is currently taking as long as 5-7 days to receive test results.

Daily symptom monitoring and the strict practice of COVID precautions including physical distancing, mask wearing, and avoiding gatherings is required through Day 14 for those who utilize the shortened quarantine options. If symptoms develop, individuals must immediately self-isolate and seek testing. We have seen many close contacts develop symptoms and test positive on Day 10-14 of quarantine. For these reasons, **we do not recommended the shortened quarantine options for congregate settings where the likelihood exists that a single case could lead to multiple other people being exposed, such as in long-term care facilities, shelters, jails, or schools.**

“We need to use all of the tools available to stop the spread of this disease. Quarantining close contacts is one of the most important of those tools,” stated Cathy Warwick, Sauk County Public Health Deputy Director. “Other tools that we can all use to stop the spread include staying home as much as possible, maintaining 6 foot physical distance from those you do not live with, wearing a face covering when you leave home, avoiding gatherings, and washing your hands. We all need to work together to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.”

For more information about COVID-19, visit <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/publichealth/coronavirus>