

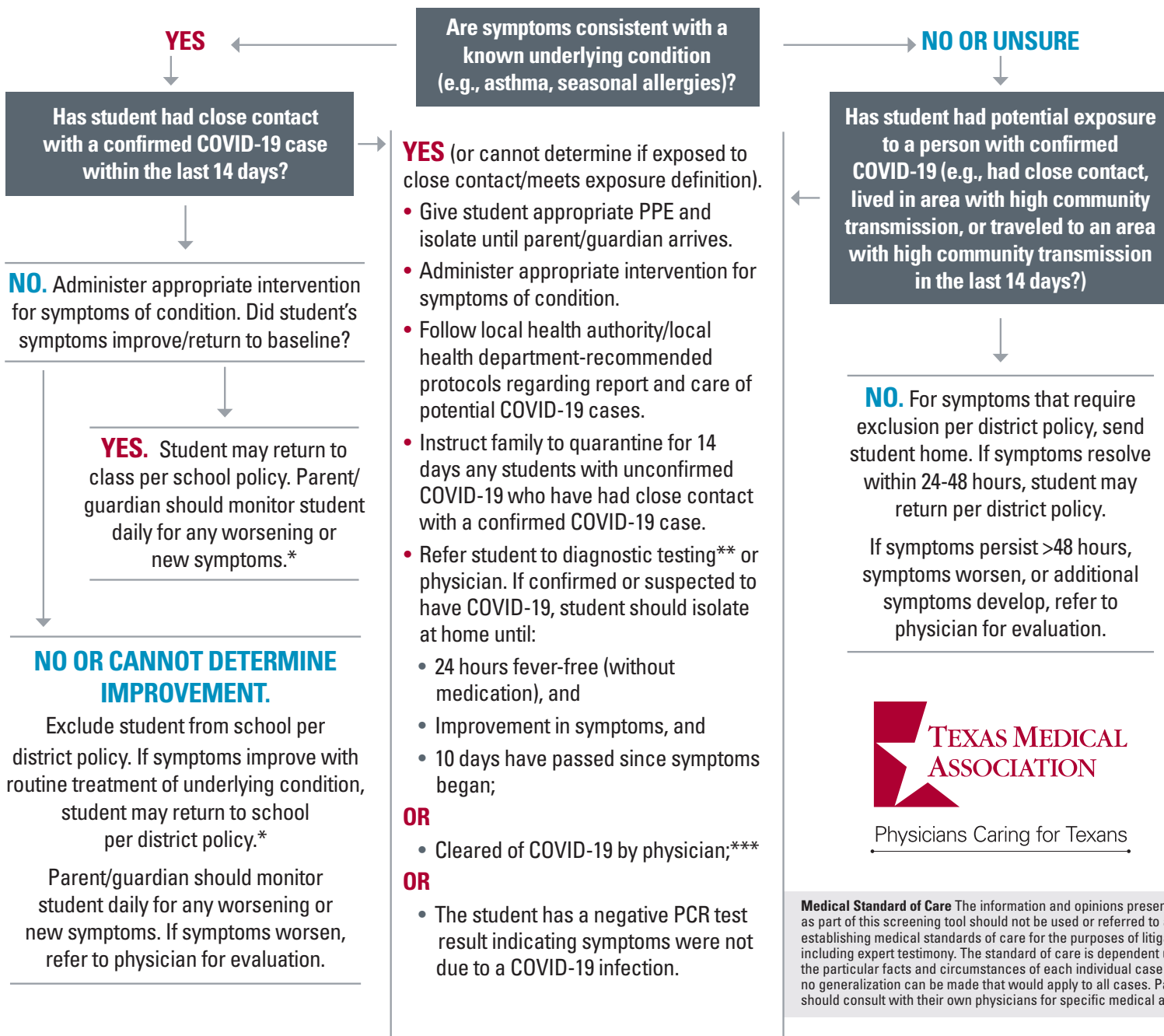
DECISION TREE TOOL FOR SCHOOL NURSES



STUDENT

presents with a possible COVID-19 symptom(s).

Try to isolate student during evaluation and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).



Physicians Caring for Texans

Medical Standard of Care The information and opinions presented as part of this screening tool should not be used or referred to as establishing medical standards of care for the purposes of litigation, including expert testimony. The standard of care is dependent upon the particular facts and circumstances of each individual case and no generalization can be made that would apply to all cases. Patients should consult with their own physicians for specific medical advice.

*Coinfection of COVID-19 and another illness is possible. If symptoms worsen or new symptoms appear, refer student to testing or to physician for evaluation.

**This can be through a PCR or antigen test. For students without access to a physician, suggest testing locations listed on the [Texas Department of State Health Services website](https://www.dhs.texas.gov/health-services).

***A doctor's note or negative test should not be required to return to school. Some tests can yield false negatives if taken too soon, and individuals with confirmed COVID-19 can continue to test positive after the infectious period has passed. Antigen tests currently are not as reliable in determining a true negative.

DECISION TREE A TOOL FOR SCHOOL NURSES

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS DISEASE



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This tool is largely adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) [Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19: Limitations and Considerations](#). It does not replace local health guidance or state agency requirements and should complement sound clinical judgment.

COVID-19 Symptoms

- Mild illness is common in pediatric cases. Most present with symptoms of upper respiratory infection.
- Significant symptoms, which may affect students' ability to learn and put them at risk for spreading to others, might be, among others:
 - Fever (in absence of local guidance, defined as 100.4°F per CDC), taking into consideration physical exertion and outside temperature, which may affect temperature reading;
 - New uncontrolled cough that causes shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergies/asthmatic cough, a change in baseline uncharacteristic of underlying illness, especially after treatment is administered);
 - New onset of severe headache, especially with fever;
 - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain; or
 - Sore throat.
- Other possible COVID-19 symptoms are:
 - New loss of taste or smell,
 - New onset of fatigue,
 - Congestion/runny nose, or
 - New onset of muscle or body aches.

Exposure Definition

A student is considered to have been exposed if he or she:

- Had close contact[‡] with a person with confirmed COVID-19 within the last 14 days,
- Traveled to an area with high community transmission of COVID-19 identified by a federal, state, or local health authority (within the last 14 days), or
- Lives in areas of high community transmission as defined by the local health department or authority.

[‡] Per CDC, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 confirmed case for at least 15 minutes regardless if either was wearing a face covering.