



Options for Exposed Children in Early Care in Education (ECE) Settings

The FAQs below are aligned with [CDPH's Guidance for Child Care Providers and Programs](#) including general [isolation and quarantine guidance](#). *See also [ACPHD's testing guidance](#) for information on confirmatory diagnostic testing and clearance testing.*

What are the options for identifying exposed children?

Until recently, child care relied on the traditional individual-level model for contact tracing. If a case was identified, staff would try to determine which children were close contacts of the case and notify them. CDPH has released a second option for identifying exposed children that may be less time consuming and disruptive for child care settings. In the test-and-stay model, child care settings can consider children to be exposed if they shared indoor airspace with a positive case for a total of 15 minutes in a day.

What do exposed children who were PREVIOUSLY INFECTED within the last 90 days need to do?

Children with a documented infection within 90 days do not need to quarantine or test. Documented infections include positive home antigen tests. Children with symptoms should be tested regardless of vaccination or previous infection status.

What do exposed, VACCINATED children need to do?

Vaccinated children do not need to quarantine and can participate in all child care activities. Exposed vaccinated children should test 3 to 5 days after the exposure with any FDA-authorized test, unless they were previously infected within the last 90 days. Children with symptoms should be tested regardless of vaccination or previous infection status.

What are the options for keeping exposed, UNVACCINATED children in care?

Unvaccinated, asymptomatic children can stay in care regardless of where the exposure takes place. Children should test 3 to 5 days after the exposure with any FDA-authorized test, unless they were previously infected within the last 90 days. Children with symptoms should be tested regardless of vaccination or previous infection status.

Can we still choose to keep exposed, UNVACCINATED children at home?

A child care program can choose to have children stay at home until the end of quarantine. CDPH guidance allows exposed persons to exit quarantine any time after Day 5 with a negative test.



Options	5-day home quarantine	Test-and-Stay
Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing between Day 3 and Day 5 is strongly recommended for all close contacts prior to exiting quarantine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing is strongly recommended for all exposed groups 3 to 5 days after exposure. - Programs can consider testing twice during the 10 days after exposure.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disruptions in program for staff, students and parents/caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program can remain open and reduces disruptions - Involves more testing - If testing resources are limited, this may not be the best option - May entail less administrative burden