



## **COVID-19 Symptom List for Screening and Testing Purposes**

**February 26, 2021**

This guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) for local use. For the most recent version, check <https://sfdcpc.org/covid19symptoms>.

### **Summary of Changes since the 9/24/2020 Version**

- Symptoms for children and youth updated to align with new CDC recommendations for schools.

### **AUDIENCE:**

1. Workplaces, schools, programs for children and youth, and other groups that screen personnel or non-personnel (including visitors, customers, patrons, clients, students etc.) for COVID 19 symptoms before allowing people into their facility
2. Health care organizations that are required by San Francisco to offer COVID-19 testing to patients with symptoms.

**PURPOSE:** To define which symptoms must be used to screen for COVID 19 and the symptoms for which testing must be offered.

## Symptom Lists

The lists do not include all possible symptoms of COVID 19. Screening forms for personnel and non-personnel can be found at [sfdcpc.org/screen](https://sfdcpc.org/screen)

### Adults

SFDPH uses the CDC list of symptoms as of 2/22/2021:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

- Fever (100.4°F/38.0°C or greater), chills, repeated shaking/shivering
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Feeling unusually weak or fatigued
- Loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Runny or congested nose
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

## Children and Youth Under 18 Years Old

SFDPH uses the CDC list of symptoms recommended for school screening, as of 2/24/2021

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

- Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher)
- Sore throat
- Cough (for children with chronic cough from allergies or asthma, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Difficulty breathing (for children with asthma, a change from their baseline breathing)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- New onset of severe headache

San Francisco uses this shorter list of symptoms because some symptoms are so common in children that they are not helpful in determining if a child likely to have COVID-19. Other symptoms are much less common in children with COVID-19 than adults.

Testing for the following symptoms is at the clinician's discretion: stuffy or runny nose; fatigue, muscle aches, and nausea.

### Resources

San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH)

- Screening for COVID-19  
<https://sfcdcp.org/screen>
- COVID-19 Guidance for Schools, Childcares, and Programs for Children and Youth:  
<https://sfcdcp.org/CovidSchoolsChildcare>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Symptoms of Coronavirus  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html#mitigation-strategies>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html#deciding>