September 2021

Dear parent or guardian,

With children back in school during a high level of community spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, primary care offices, urgent care centers and emergency departments are seeing very high volumes. In addition to seeking medical care for illnesses and other medical conditions, families are also coming to these facilities looking for COVID-19 testing and medical clearance for returning to school. This high demand for services is currently overwhelming many healthcare facilities.

To avoid potentially long wait times and delayed well-child visits, we are asking for your help. We recommend you do not seek COVID-19 tests at urgent care centers, emergency departments or your pediatrician's office unless you are also seeking medical care. If you only need a test, we recommend visiting a local COVID-19 testing site. Visit dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting for a list of testing locations. Note: If you live in a community where independent COVID-19 testing centers are not available, contact your local health department regarding testing availability before visiting a primary care office, urgent care center or emergency department, if it is safe to do so.

Please continue to follow the guidance from the CDC, Department of Public Health and Department of Education regarding quarantine for children exposed to COVID-19 and for the isolation of children who test positive for COVID-19.

Here is a list of helpful resources:
- Symptoms of COVID-19 |CDC
- COVID-19, who should get tested |CDC
- Quarantine Guidance: What to do if you were exposed to someone with COVID-19 |GA DPH
- Isolation Guidance |GA DPH
- COVID-19 and Schools |GA DOE
- COVID-19 Guidance for Prevention in K-12 Schools | CDC

We wish you and your family a safe and successful school year as we work together to navigate this pandemic.

Sincerely,

James Fortenberry, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Dan Salinas, MD
Chief Community Clinical Integration Officer
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Gary Frank, MD
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