

COVID-related HIS Health guidelines in 2021/2022

Since these guidelines were originally published, access to PCR testing in Hiroshima has improved drastically so responding to any cold/flu like symptoms with a PCR test is far easier now. Vaccinations are also moving along with easy access which is great news for us all, and although the vaccination does not eliminate transmission, symptoms appear to be far less severe for vaccinated people. We would encourage vaccinations, particularly with the Delta variants of COVID now making up the bulk of new cases in Japan. Our basic health guidelines at HIS remain largely unchanged.

Please do not come to school if:

- a. You have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- b. When you take your temperature in the morning:
 - i. You have a high fever (37.5 degrees or higher), a persistent cough or any cold/flu-like symptoms.
 - ii. You have a higher temperature than normal (i.e. it is rising but may not yet be at 37.5 degrees) You should stay home to monitor.)

Summary of responses to symptoms:

Temperature	Response	Notes/Exceptions
Your Normal temperature (& no other symptoms)	No problem. Come to school.	
Higher than normal temperature but below 37.5 (or other symptoms)	Stay at home & monitor. People have slight fluctuations in temperature for a variety of reasons.	As temperatures are taken everyday, you will have an idea of the range of your child's normal temperature. Can come to school the day after the temperature returns to normal. PCR testing is easily accessible and we encourage testing when in doubt.
High Fever 37.5 or above	Stay at home.	<p>A return to school is possible only after one of the below criteria are met:</p> <p>Criterion 1: A doctor confirms that the symptoms are not COVID related. (i.e. PCR test)</p> <p>Criterion 2: You have been free of fever & other symptoms for 3 full calendar days without the use of fever-reducing medication; & at least 7 calendar days have passed since the symptoms first appeared (counting the first day of symptoms as day 1)</p>

- c. You have been in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID 19 within the past 14 days
- d. You have returned from overseas within the past 14 days.
- e. You are staying in the same household with anyone who has returned to Japan from overseas within the past 14 days.
- f. You are staying in the same household of a family member (or another close contact) who has cold or flu-like symptoms (temperature, cough, etc.). In this case, see table above.

Please note:

- *With readily available PCR testing now available in Hiroshima, this is recommended if in any doubt. We strongly advise a visit to the doctor as soon as a high fever is detected, or in the case of any of the above points.*
- *The free PCR testing centres in Hiroshima are not for people with symptoms. If you have symptoms such as a high temperature, you will need to book at a clinic that is seeing people with symptoms.*

2. **Daily Temperature/General Symptoms Check:** Please check your child's temperature every morning. Children do not often realize they have a high temperature until later in the day. If we find out at school, it is too late after the bus ride and being in contact with others. As usual, please do not send your child to school if they are not well. This is especially important now, as you can imagine.
 - a. We will ask families to record the temperature on a Health Observation Form.
 - b. When schools resume, all students need to bring this with them and show it to their homeroom teacher. We will require this for students to get on the HIS buses, as well. We will need everyone to help us with this. Thanks
3. **Masks** will be worn by all community members within the school unless eating or drinking. This includes buses. Please follow teacher instructions if engaged in physical activity. See note below regarding physical activity and heat exhaustion.
 - a. The high summer temperatures are a consideration as heat exhaustion is also a concern. Heat exhaustion is extremely dangerous and also causes symptoms that may be similar to COVID 19 such as nausea, headaches and high temperatures. Drinking sufficient water and avoiding overheating are important to monitor. If engaged in physical activity, teachers will instruct students to remove masks.
4. **Hygiene:** Students will be instructed each morning the most effective way to minimize the effect of coughing and sneezing. [How to protect others when you sneeze.](#) Keeping hands away from the face and hair is also encouraged.
5. **Hayfever awareness:** We will remind everyone that some members of the community are affected by hayfever so we need to be sensitive to their needs, such as not assuming a sneeze means a virus-related condition.

6. **General Health:** Students need to be getting enough sleep, regular exercise, eating well and drinking lots of water, as usual. All students should have a reusable water bottle with them each day. (There is a Hands-free bottle filler at the school.)
7. **Hand Sanitizer:** There are hand sanitizers in each classroom. Students may also wish to have their own private sanitizer if they wish.
8. **Washing of hands:** Students will be reminded daily about the most effective way of washing hands. The drying of hands is equally important and the recommendation is single-use paper towels.
9. **Fresh Air:** Teachers will ensure that the windows of all classes will be open regularly during the school day to ensure airflow within the air-conditioned environment.
10. **Social distancing:** Teachers, when necessary, will remind students to maintain distance between themselves as much as possible. Please reinforce at home.
11. **Lunch utensils:** Please supply some type of eating utensils so that students do not need to eat their lunch with their fingers.
12. **Possible adjusted start times:** In order for students traveling by public transport to avoid busy times on your particular route, please consider departure times. If this means arriving at school a bit late, this is fine. Just let the office and the homeroom teacher know.
13. **Vaccinations:** We encourage eligible community members to have a vaccination to provide a degree of protection for vaccinated individuals as well helping us to limit the spread of COVID within the broader community. However, vaccinations are not compulsory and as an individual's vaccination status is classified as personal information protected under Japanese privacy laws, HIS will not be asking community members regarding vaccination status.

What happens if there is a case of COVID-19 within the HIS Community

In the case of a HIS student or staff member with a COVID-19 diagnosis

- If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 the School (or a section of the School) may move to online learning for a short period during which time:
 - The local health authorities will be consulted to determine the length and scope of school closure.
 - The school will undergo localized disinfection.

In the case of close contact of a HIS staff or student with someone with a COVID-19 diagnosis

- If there is a case of COVID-19 in the extended community such as a family member, the student/staff member will quarantine at home as described in 1 (above).
 - The School will alert other parents within the division (but school will continue as normal).
 - Parents who choose to keep their child at home are welcome to do so.

In the case that a student develops symptoms during the school day

- If a student develops symptoms while at school, they will be immediately placed into isolation while parents are contacted to arrange for the immediate collection from school.
 - In this case, parents must collect their child by private car, not by public transportation, including taxis.