

COVID-19 screening by rapid tests at school

To avoid any further class closures, we must remain vigilant to ensure that students continue to receive their educational services at school. For this reason, **your co-operation in consenting to have your child tested for COVID-19 at school is important.**

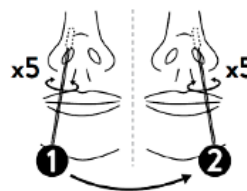
However, if your child shows **symptoms of COVID-19**, it is vital that they stay home. A test should then be administered at a designated screening centre. Visit the **[COVID-19 Screening Platform](#)** to find the screening centre nearest you and book an appointment. The **[self-assessment tool](#)** is also available to help you make the best decision in case of doubt.

COVID-19 Screening at School

Public health authorities have distributed rapid tests in all preschools and elementary schools in Québec. Rapid tests make it possible to quickly determine if a student who develops symptoms during the day is positive for COVID-19 and, if so, to implement the necessary measures. These tests supplement the other prevention measures in place to limit the risk of outbreaks in schools.

COVID-19 screening at school involves testing a child who develops symptoms during the day or who has been in close contact with a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 at a screening centre. This test is carried out by a designated person trained for this purpose.

The Panbio™ test by Abbott will be used for this screening. It is free and will be carried out during class hours. It only takes a few minutes and the result is available in 15 minutes. The test consists in taking a shallow nasal swab (as opposed to the more invasive tests used in screening centres) using a device that looks like a cotton swab (see image below). There are no side effects, only a slight discomfort that may be felt during the swabbing.



Rapid Tests Extended to the Whole Class

A gradual deployment of Panbio™ rapid screening tests is currently underway with a view to testing all students who have been in contact with a person in their class who has tested positive for COVID-19 at a screening centre. This new measure to manage cases and contacts is being deployed in selected schools due to the epidemiological situation in their region.

Specifically, once the school has confirmation that a student has tested positive (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test at a screening centre) following a positive Panbio™ test performed at school, Panbio™ tests will be administered to all students in that class. The test will be carried out during school hours, on all students in the class, even if they do not have symptoms. This measure is an additional tool to limit the spread of COVID-19 in schools.

In the event that your child develops symptoms related to COVID-19 during the day, or that all the students in their class are to be tested, and you have not given your consent, your child will not be tested. If your child shows symptoms, they will be isolated and you will be contacted to come pick them up.

Voluntary Participation in Screening

Please fill out the consent form provided by your school, sign it and return it to your child's teacher to let them know if you agree to have your child tested at school. Your consent is valid for the whole school year.

Participation in COVID-19 screening is voluntary. You may refuse to have your child tested or withdraw your consent at any time. Regardless of your decision, it is important to follow all public health recommendations and continue to comply with the [basic health instructions](#) and those in effect at your child's school.

Screening Results

The screening result and any accompanying recommendations will be communicated to you promptly by the school administration.

- **Negative result:** The child can stay in class, wearing a mask. You must remain vigilant. If your child's symptoms persist, take them to a designated screening centre to have a laboratory test performed.
- **Positive result:** The child is isolated. You will be contacted to bring your child home and have them tested at a designated screening centre.