



One Year In: Our Collective Response to COVID-19

Testing – PCR & Antigen



- Increase access & volume so people with COVID-19 are aware of their diagnosis and can isolate
- Surveillance testing
- Antigen testing for symptomatic individuals

Case Investigation & Contact Tracing



- Isolate when positive
- Quarantine close contacts
- Trace close & household contacts
- Quarantine these contacts -> watch for symptoms

Prevention



- Stay home when ill
- Physical distancing
- Hand washing/clean surfaces
- Wear a mask
- Gathering order, sector guidance
- Vaccination

Support/Education

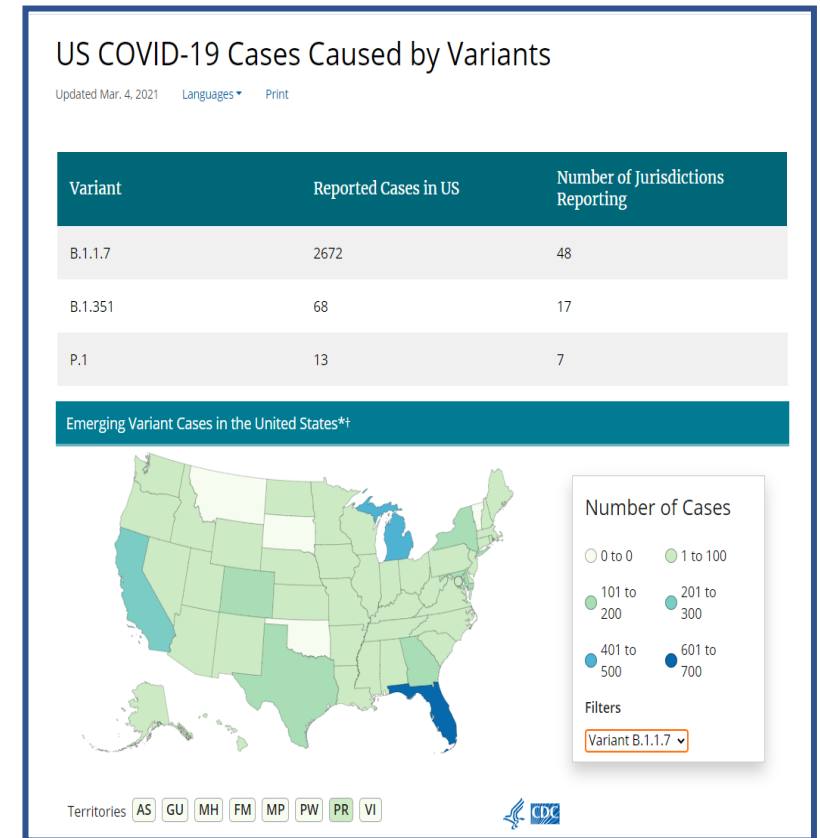


- Provide education and resources
- Travel advisory
- Synthesis of latest info
- Protect privacy
- Promote over all-health
- Big-picture & data analysis



Watching the Data, Working Together:

- WPS & Board of Health in Regular Communication
- Town of Weston, Regional and State Data
- Case Rates: #s in Isolation & Quarantine
- Positivity Rates
- Testing Uptake in WPS
- Vaccine Uptake, Availability
- Variants
- Changes to orders and guidance
- State and Federal Information
- DESE, CDC, APA, etc., research driven





COVID-19 Tests

Individual Diagnostic Tests

Looking for the genetic material of SARS-CoV-2.
Used after known exposure to someone with
Coronavirus, including symptomatic and testing
asymptomatic people in quarantine

Molecular Tests (PCR)

- Tests for genetic material of the virus
- Most sensitive
- How variants are found
- Results in 1-3 days
- Usually lab-run, can be 'rapid' (less common)

Antigen Tests

- Identify viral proteins
- Tests for current infection
- Less likely to find early infection but likely to find if infectious
- Rapid/Point of Care

Blood Tests: Antibody or Serology

Tests identify presence of COVID-19 antibodies in blood samples signaling past or current infection (not often used, not diagnostic of present illness)

Group Screening or Surveillance Tests

Looking for occurrence at the individual level even if there is no individual reason to suspect infection such as a known exposure. Seeking to prevent an outbreak (school, college, long term care/nursing homes) from asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic group

Individual Tests (Antigen)

- Most often antigen-type tests
- Can be "Rapid PCR"

Pooled (grouped) Tests (PCR)

- Combine multiple samples yields one result per grouping
- Must test further if pool is positive
- Cost effective



Why are we testing for COVID-19 at school?

- Surveillance testing keeps everyone safer - **NEW: Pooled PCR & Follow Up Antigen Testing**
 - Early case identification stops the spread (prevents *more* cases)
 - More than half of transmissions come from asymptomatic individuals ¹
 - Increased opportunity for close contact and transmission when we do more living and learning
 - Saves money and time when rates are low
- Individual diagnosis - **Diagnostic PCR and Antigen for Symptomatic Individuals**
 - Isolates positive individuals after close contact or symptom development
 - Contact tracing follows
 - Rule out another diagnosis
- More to learn
 - Certain situations appear more risky
 - Higher risk activities: Singing, playing instruments, higher-risk sports, bus riding, carpooling
 - Testing is mandated for participation in athletics and music programs at Middle and High Schools
 - Participation by ALL students/staff and faculty is strongly recommended
 - Inability to wear masks: Eating
 - Inability to maintain 6-foot physical distancing: Students 4-6 feet apart in the classroom
 - Still watching variants of concern
- Testing remains only a snapshot of the individual's status when the test is taken: Stay vigilant!

¹Johansson, M.A., Quandelacy, T.M., et al, 2021 Jan, JAMA Network; 4(1):e2035057. doi:10.1001



Updated COVID-19 Testing Plan for Weston Schools:

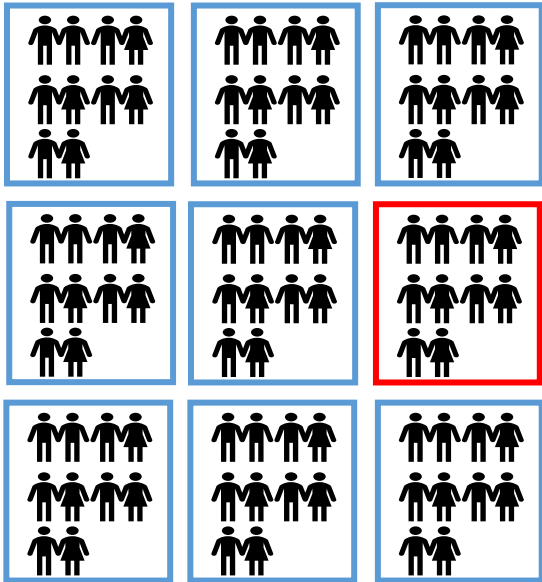
Test Type	Who	Why	Where	When	How
Weekly Individual PCR	Faculty, Staff	Surveillance	School	Scheduled Weekly	WPS Nurses
NEW: Weekly Pooled PCR	Faculty, Staff, Students	Surveillance	School	Scheduled during school day	WPS Nurses
Rapid Antigen (BinaxNOW)	Only those in positive pool	Diagnosis of COVID-19	School	If there is a positive pool	WPS Nurses
On Demand PCR	Faculty, Staff, Students	Quarantine Testing; Diagnosis of COVID-19	School (Drive Thru) or Testing Center	Day 5 of Quarantine; Negative Binax Pool	WPS Nurses or Other Testing Center
On Demand Rapid Antigen (BinaxNOW)	Symptomatic	Diagnosis of COVID-19	School	If someone develops symptoms while at school	WPS Nurses



Coronavirus Response (COVID-19) Working Together:
Town of Weston Board of Health & Weston Public Schools

Pooled Testing for Weston Schools:

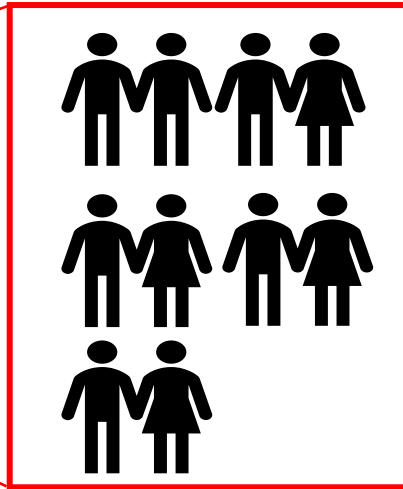
WPS Faculty & Student Pools



Results: 24-48 hours

Parents staff notified only of positive pool

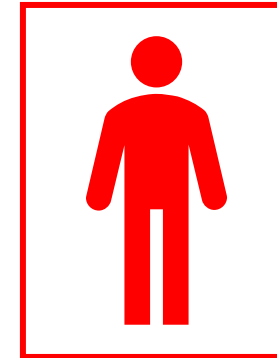
Positive Pool Retested with Rapid Antigen Test



Results: 15 minutes

Parents notified of antigen results
Negative students/staff back to class

Positive Individual



Individual sent home for isolation
Close contacts identified & quarantined



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What testing looks like:



What WHS/WMS Students Say About Testing:

“It’s super easy to test yourself.”

“It doesn’t hurt – the q-tip barely goes in your nose.”

“The nurses are really nice!”

“It takes about a minute and a half to check in, swab your nose and put your swab in a tube the nurse holds out for you”.



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I/my Child has been identified as a *Positive Case*, now what?

A positive case is defined as:

- Any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19
- PCR or Rapid Antigen (BinaxNOW)

The Goal of Isolation is to Limit the Spread of Coronavirus

- Isolation for 10 days or until symptoms resolve
- Collaborate with Local Board of Health to identify potential close contacts
- Honest report, compliance
- Official clearance from Local Board of Health

Next step? Identification of Close Contacts...



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I/my Child has been identified as a *Close Contact*, what is that?

A close contact is defined as:

- Being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over 24 hours
- Masked or unmasked
- Inside or outside
- Beginning two days before symptom onset or positive test date for asymptomatic individuals

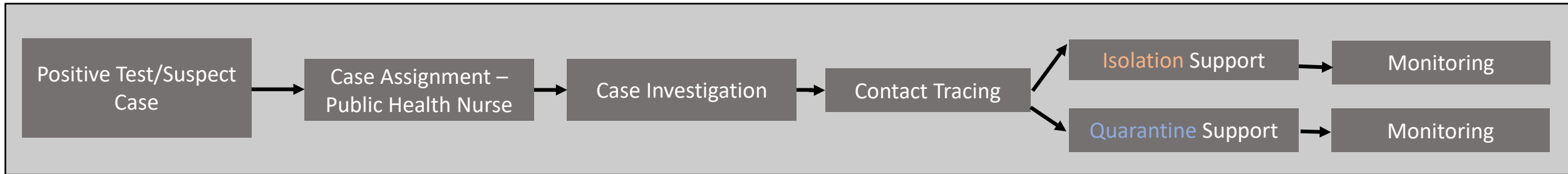
How do you know I/my child is a Close Contact?

- Seating charts
- Interview of case, teachers as needed, school nurses and public health nurses
- Honest report, compliance

Now what? Case Investigation...



Case Investigation: Early Action Stops the Spread



Isolation – for CASES

- Symptomatic with COVID-19
- Confirmed cases (positive test)
- Goal: Prevent further infections
- Lasts until person is no longer contagious (usually 10 days)

Quarantine – for CLOSE CONTACTS

- For asymptomatic people with known close contact exposure
- Goal: Prevent infection of others if symptoms develop
- Lasts for 7-14 days from last known exposure, testing recommended day 5 following exposure
- If no illness develops->release after 7 to 10 days
- If develop illness->Isolate

Local Public Health and School Nurses help identify cases and contacts: You don't have to figure this out on your own



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COVID-19 Vaccination in MA: Phase 1 & 2 Eligibility Status

Phase 1

All phase 1 priority groups

Now eligible

Phase 2

1

Individuals age 75+

Now eligible

2

Individuals 65+ and individuals with 2+ certain medical conditions

Now eligible

3

K-12 educators, child care workers, and school staff

Eligible on 3/11

4

Transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation public works, and public health workers

Not yet eligible

5

Individuals with 1 certain medical condition

Not yet eligible

For more details on each group and phase visit mass.gov/COVIDvaccine



@massgov



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Learn More:

- Weston Board of Health website
- WPS emails (please read these!!)
- March 17: Weston PTO Stem Council/High School Science Department - Understanding COVID: A Scientific Symposium for Secondary Students
- Reach out
 - Schuckel.m@WestonMA.gov
 - gaynorj@weston.org

www.WestonMA.gov/Health

All COVID-19 Information



COVID-19 Local Case Report

Find the weekly dashboard of testing and positive case numbers for Weston, updated weekly on Fridays.



COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Find information on COVID-19 vaccine clinics offered by the Commonwealth. Weston's Board of Health will not be receiving vaccine from the state to hold any local clinics.



COVID-19 Vaccine Phasing

The application of the COVID-19 vaccine is determined at the state level and is broken down into three phases. Find the current eligibility and resources to the state's phasing plan.



COVID-19 Testing

Find local and state-wide testing locations.



COVID-19 Questions & Resources

Find health and human resources, as well as additional information during this ongoing public health emergency



Assistance Resources

Find links to mental, health, and human resources for individuals impacted by the ongoing pandemic.



Health Department

Find the typical services offered by Weston's Health Department

