



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES 2023

This summer marks the third summer of in-person programming after we canceled in-person camp in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2020, we have learned a lot about how to keep campers safe from COVID-19 and other communicable and respiratory illnesses (such as the flu). With the end of the federal Public Health Emergency in May 2023, MCBC is making the pivot towards treating COVID-19 like any other communicable disease that may be present at camp this year and interrupt a camper's experience at camp.

For our purposes, a "communicable disease" is defined as "an infectious disease capable of being transmitted from one person or species to another or from a surface or food."¹ Some common examples of communicable diseases are COVID-19, Hepatitis A, B, and C, Influenza, and Tuberculosis.

We have always followed the guidance of the American Camp Association (ACA) and the Alliance for Camp Health (ACH) when setting protocols and guidelines for how to handle communicable disease. Before diving into our specific policies and procedures this year, take a minute to read this letter from the ACH:



On May 11, 2023, the US declared the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency signifying an end to certain federal policies and data collection. However, coronavirus remains a public health priority as camps begin our fourth summer with lower, albeit continued, infections, hospitalizations, and deaths. Both day and overnight summer camps have closely followed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health guidelines from strict prevention to mitigation and containment, endeavoring to protect individuals and the communities we serve from serious illness. Over the last four summers, the camp community has successfully pivoted and transitioned at each turn of the pandemic, striving to balance the seriousness of the pandemic with the joy and benefits of the camp experience.

Collectively we enter another summer where camps must create communicable disease plans without clear guidance. In response, the American Camp Association (ACA) and the Alliance for Camp Health (ACH) determined

¹ University of Arkansas (n.d.). *Communicable Diseases*. Pat Walker Health Center. Retrieved June 23, 2023, from <https://health.uark.edu/communicable-diseases/>



the best course of action is to write this letter to the camp community, informed by our conversations with the CDC.

First and foremost, camps must seek local and state public health guidelines and regulations as they determine their [communicable disease plan](#) for the summer.

Second, it's important to highlight that the end of the public health emergency has not yet changed CDC recommendations on isolation and post-exposure testing. However, in recent correspondence with ACA and ACH, the CDC highlights that these are recommendations and not requirements.

Third, we would like to stress that COVID-19 is one of a multitude of respiratory viruses that may be present at camp this year, the vast majority of which are mild, self-limited, and do not require testing to change the treatment or trajectory of the illness in healthy children. As camps consider their communicable disease plans, they should discuss balancing respiratory disease management focused on [preventing moderate/severe disease outcomes](#), while also striving for balance within the continuity of camp programming.

Camps now have experience and access to a variety of actions to prevent the spread of infectious disease including [vaccination](#), staying home (or in the health center) when sick, maximizing outdoor programming, handwashing, respiratory etiquette, and cleaning measures to sanitize. When respiratory diseases are spreading in camp, extra measures may be considered, including masking and testing. In their recent correspondence, the CDC writes *"When deciding which prevention measures to implement, camps should consider the local context and balance the risks of infectious disease with the educational, social, and mental health outcomes."*

Finally, all camps are strongly encouraged to communicate clearly with families, campers, and staff about their summer communicable disease plan and its rationale. Setting expectations for how camps will handle mild illness symptoms, how they will respond to respiratory disease spread in camp, and how/if they will employ testing for any viral suspects is essential to ensure families and staff can make informed personal health choices.

Our shared mission is to support healthy camping experiences as part of a larger healing process for youth and their families as they grow and thrive in a life disrupted by the pandemic. We are here to support you in this collective endeavor. Wishing you all a safe, happy, and healthy summer season!

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Disclaimer

The information presented here is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the precautions that are implemented at camp, and only serves as a summary/guide.



PRIOR TO CAMP

- **Rapid Antigen Test consent**

All staff, volunteers, and program participants will be sent – via CampDoc and a printed application packet – a consent form indicating permission for camp Medical Staff to administer a rapid antigen test to detect the presence of SARS-CoV2, influenza A and influenza B in campers suspected of having a respiratory illness. If caregivers or program participants decline consent for testing, they will be sent home if they present with symptoms of a respiratory illness at any point during the camp program.

- **Vaccinations**

It is our *strong* preference that all campers come to camp with all the immunizations and vaccinations that are required for public school attendance. This information is captured on our pre-camp medical form and the Burns Recovered office may reach out to your child's primary care provider directly for this information. Exemptions are made on a case-by-case basis.

It is also our *strong* preference that program participants ages 5 and above receive the COVID-19 vaccine and reach full immunity at least two weeks before traveling to camp.

- **Arrive at camp healthy!**

A healthy staff member, volunteer, and camper starts at home. Please review the handout at the back of this document for tips on how to make sure your program participant arrives at the program site in the healthiest state possible!

TRAVEL TO CAMP

Staff, Volunteer, and Participants who use personal transportation to Program Site:

- **For Midwest Children's Burn Camp caregivers:**

All luggage should be placed in the trunk of each camper's car. A Midwest Children's Burn Camp volunteer will remove luggage from vehicles.

We ask that caregivers say goodbye to their camper from inside their vehicle.

- **With camper or volunteer still in the vehicle** a designated staff member of the Burns Recovered medical team will perform an initial health screening that includes checking for presence of Communicable disease-related symptoms and temperature
 - At Midwest Children's Burn Camp: this temperature check and health screening will be performed in the presence of the camper's caregiver
 - **An individual who has a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or shows communicable disease symptoms will not be permitted on the Program site.**

- Staff, Volunteers, and Participants will be asked the following communicable disease screening questions prior to exiting their vehicle:
 - Have you experienced any communicable disease symptoms in the last 24 hours (including but not limited to fever of 100 or greater, shortness of breath, cough, or loss of taste or smell)?



- Have you or anyone you live with been exposed to or diagnosed with a communicable disease within the past 14 days?
 - If “yes” – participant will be administered a rapid antigen test and decision whether to permit participant into program is based on results of the test
- Are you or anyone you live with waiting for test results for a communicable disease?
 - If “yes” – participant will be administered a rapid antigen test and decision whether to permit participant into program is based on results of the test
- After completing the health screening and temperature check, if the program participant continues to enter the program site, the program participant will use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol prior to entering the program site.

Staff, Volunteer, and Participants who use chartered transportation to Program Site:

- **For Midwest Children’s Burn Camp caregivers:**
All luggage should be placed in the trunk of each camper’s car. A Midwest Children’s Burn Camp volunteer will remove luggage from vehicles.

We ask that caregivers say goodbye to their camper from inside their vehicle.

- **Campers will remain in the vehicle** while healthcare providers perform an initial health screening that includes checking for presence of communicable disease-related symptoms
 - At Midwest Children’s Burn Camp: this temperature check and health screening will be performed in the presence of the camper’s caregiver.
 - An individual who has a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or shows communicable disease symptoms will not be permitted on the Program site.
- Staff, Volunteers, and Participants will be asked the following COVID-19 screening questions prior to exiting their vehicle:
 - Have you experienced any communicable disease symptoms in the last 24 hours (including but not limited to fever of 100 or greater, shortness of breath, cough, or loss of taste or smell)?
 - Have you or anyone you live with been exposed to or diagnosed with a communicable disease within the past 14 days?
 - If “yes” – participant will be administered a rapid antigen test and decision whether to permit participant into program is based on results of the test
 - Are you or anyone you live with waiting for test results for a communicable disease?
 - If “yes” – participant will be administered a rapid antigen test and decision whether to permit participant into program is based on results of the test
- After completing the health screening and temperature check, if the program participant continues to enter chartered transportation, participant will use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol prior to entering the chartered vehicle.
- Passengers will be oriented to the following best practice procedures for reducing spread:
 - Cough or sneeze into your elbow
 - Avoid touching mouth, nose, and eyes
 - Proper handwashing and hand sanitizing procedures



AT CAMP

We have outlined pre-camp expectations and have declared that we will not be permitting anyone to enter camp when exhibiting communicable disease symptoms. However, no combination of mitigation procedures is 100% accurate and we cannot guarantee that with even these protocols in place that we will prevent communicable disease from arriving on campus.

Below is a review of the different “Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions” (NPIs) that MCBC is using to keep your camper as safe as possible during the 2023 camp season. All modified camp rules and procedures will be announced to all campers during the first day of camp, including hand washing and sanitizing procedures.

Cabin Guidelines:

- Campers in bunk beds are required to sleep in opposite directions (head-to-toe and toe-to-head)
- There will be a sanitation station within each cabin. Campers will sanitize their hands before entering and when exiting the cabin.
- One counselor per cabin will carry hand sanitizer as well as disinfectant spray to wipe down commonly used equipment.
- Cabin shutters will always remain **OPEN**.

Mask Wearing Policy

Starting in summer 2023, Burns Recovered and Midwest Children’s Burn Camp **will not require masks in any setting during the camp session**. We will treat wearing a mask as a personal preference and will treat anyone’s decision to wear or not wear a mask with respect and understanding.

The only instance in which a program participant will be required to wear a mask is if the program participant tests positive for COVID-19, the flu, or any other respiratory illness.

Cleaning, Handwashing, and Sanitization Procedures

MCBC and Camp Taum Sauk will continue to practice frequent cleaning, handwashing, and sanitization procedures. MCBC Volunteers will be responsible for keeping their sleeping quarters and common spaces clean and encourage their campers to participate in the cleaning process.

- Every table in the dining hall and picnic tables will have a large hand pump of sanitizer
- Door knobs, handles and other commonly touched areas will be wiped with antibacterial spray frequently
- **The activity instructor will sanitize activity equipment after EACH use**, especially shared camp equipment, such as life jackets, canoe paddles, bows and arrows, helmets, fishing poles, and all sports equipment. Campers will also sanitize their hands after using shared equipment.
- **Cabin Counselors will carry hand sanitizer** from activity to activity for their cabin to use between activities.
- Every building around the camp where an activity is held, as well as high use outdoor equipment, will have a spray bottle of disinfectant and/or a hand sanitizer pump. Every camp vehicle will also have spray bottles of sanitizer.



- Other common spaces, such as the office, health center, shower houses, and bathrooms will be sanitized regularly throughout the day.

Swimming Pool/Waterfront

Because we rent from Camp Taum Sauk, an accredited camp with the American Camping Association, we will be following their policies regarding program participants and water activities. They are as follows:

There is no current evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to people through water in a pool or river. Taum Sauk will implement additional safety measures this summer, including:

- Campers and staff should follow proper hand hygiene practices prior to/following using any river activities (canoeing, rafting, kayaking, paddle boarding, etc.)
- All shared use equipment (paddles, life jackets, fishing poles, nets, goggles) should be cleaned and disinfected before AND after each use
- Maintenance staff will spray life jackets, paddles, canoes, rafts, kayaks, and paddle boards with disinfectant

Health Center

In addition to MCBC's existing health center procedures and practices, we will be taking additional measures to minimize the risk of communicable disease.

Sanitization procedures:

- Doorknobs, handles, and other commonly touched areas will be wiped down with antibacterial product often
- When a sick camper or staff member checks out of the Health Center, their area will be fully sanitized

Isolation procedures:

There is a bedroom with a separate bathroom in the Health Center that is available for any program participant who needs to be isolated because of a positive COVID test or flu test.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- N95 respirators and eye protection or face shields should be worn by staff when they anticipate contact with or proximity to confirmed or suspected communicable disease or flu cases or when cleaning and disinfecting areas known or suspected to have been in contact with confirmed or suspected communicable disease cases



WHAT IF SOMEONE EXPERIENCES COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SYMPTOMS DURING CAMP?

Patient care and management for campers or staff with communicable disease-suspect symptoms

1. The patient will be isolated from the rest of the camp population.
 - a. If stable, the patient with suspected communicable disease will be administered a Rapid Antigen test that yields results in 15 minutes
 - i. If the antigen test produces a positive result, the patient will be prepared to be sent home as soon as possible. The patient will be placed in a designated communicable disease isolated area and cared for by the medical director and medical staff. The patient will remain masked as long as symptoms allow, and providers will follow strict CDC guidelines for caring for a patient with communicable disease.
 - ii. If the antigen test produces a negative result, the patient will be monitored for a period of 24 hours and will continue to follow all physical distancing and mask-wearing requirements and will increase mask-wearing frequency (to be worn at all times except when sleeping). The patient will be tested again after 24 hours and if the test produces another negative result, the patient can return to normal camp activities. If the test yields a positive result, the healthcare team will follow the protocol identified above.
 - b. If unstable, the medical director and medical staff will attend to the patient per medical standards and guidelines and transported to a nearby emergency department for further evaluation and treatment
2. In the case of a camper with communicable disease-suspect symptoms and a positive antigen test, the Medical Director will contact the caregivers via phone to discuss care and follow-up up to and including having a caregiver pick up the camper within 12 hours.
3. In the case of a staff member with communicable disease-suspect symptoms and a positive antigen test, the staff member is responsible for transporting themselves home.

Patient care and management for campers and staff in an activity group of an individual with confirmed communicable disease:

1. A program participant is considered “exposed” if they are in the camper’s activity group
2. Anyone who was exposed will be monitored closely for a period of 3 days.
 - a. Counselors advised to be alert for symptoms of communicable disease:
 - i. fever, loss of sensation of taste or smell, cough, headache, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, runny nose, shortness of breath, sore throat, and fatigue
3. If anyone develops symptoms over the 3-day period, administer rapid test according to the procedures outlined above



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND MCBC

Q: Are Vaccines required for MCBC 2023 program participants?

A: No, vaccines are not required. However, MCBC maintains that the best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated and we encourage all eligible participants (those ages 5 and above) to get vaccinated and reach full immunity 2 weeks prior to arriving at the campsite. If you are having trouble obtaining a vaccine, please call the Burns Recovered office at (314) 939-1550 and we will help you out.

Q: Are COVID tests required for MCBC 2023 program participants?

A: No. Starting in 2023, MCBC is not requiring that program participants bring proof of a negative COVID test when they arrive at camp.

Q: Is there anything my camper and our family needs to do prior to camp to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and other communicable disease transmission?

A: The most important thing that camp families can do is to have all campers arrive at camp healthy. Tips on how to keep campers healthy prior to coming to camp can be found at the back of this document.

Q: Why am I being asked to sign a testing consent form if you are not requiring my camper to bring proof of a negative test to camp?

A: The testing consent form is to give permission to our camp medical team to administer a rapid antigen test to your camper if your camper begins to display symptoms consistent with a communicable disease diagnosis while at camp. Campers without permission to test will be sent home if they begin to display symptoms consistent with communicable disease.

Q: Will my camper be required to wear a mask at any point during MCBC 2023?

A: The only time that program participants will be required to wear a mask at MCBC 2023 is if they test positive for a communicable disease while at camp. At all other times, wearing a mask is optional.

Q: What kind of mask can my camper wear at MCBC 2023?

A: Any cloth mask that fits your face snugly that you can wear for long periods of time. A mask fits "snugly" when it covers the nose and there are no gaps at the cheeks. Neck gaiters are *not* acceptable masks. If your camper does not bring an appropriate mask to camp, MCBC will provide one for them.



Q: What are my responsibilities if my camper tests positive for communicable disease while at camp?

A: Similar to any other emergency situation while at camp, we expect caregivers or an emergency contact to be reachable by phone at all times during the week of camp programming. This expectation is in place to maintain a safe and healthy camp experience for all. There may be times during the week where your camper needs to go home right away.

In the case of a positive test for communicable disease at camp, the camp Medical Director will call the camper's caregiver to discuss a plan of action up to and including requiring the caregiver to pick up the camper within 12 hours.



A Healthy Camp Begins and Ends at Home! ***Revised: March 2021***

Currently available online at

<https://www.campnurse.org/education-and-resources/resources/>

<https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/research/healthy-camp-toolbox>

This PDF is intended for camp professionals to distribute to their campers' parents/guardians.



A Healthy Camp Begins and Ends at Home!

A healthy camp really does start at home. Here are some things you can do to help your child have a great camp experience.

1. If your child is showing signs of illness such as running a temperature, throwing up, has diarrhea, nasal drainage and/or coughing/sneezing, keep the child home and contact your camp director. This greatly reduces the spread of illness at camp but also supports your child's recovery. Know your camp's policy about illness and camp attendance.
2. Teach your child to sneeze/cough in his/her sleeve and to wash his/her hands often while at camp, especially before eating and after toileting. If you really want to achieve impact, teach your child to accompany hand washing with another behavior: keeping their hands away from their face.
3. If your child has mental, emotional, or social health challenges, talk with a camp representative before camp starts. Proactively discussing a camp's ability to accommodate a child can help minimize – if not eliminate – potential problems.



4. Should your child need a particular nutrition plan because of allergies, intolerances or a diagnosis (e.g., diabetes), note these on the Health History form but also contact the camp to make sure (a) they have noted that need and (b) the camp can address it. Discuss how your child will receive appropriate meals and snacks then explain that to your camper. Should your child be uncomfortable with the plan, arrange for a camp staff member to assist/monitor the process until the child is comfortable.



5. Make sure your child has and wears appropriate close-toed shoes for activities such as soccer and hiking, and that your child understands that camp is a more rugged environment than the sub/urban setting. Talk with your child about wearing appropriate shoes to avoid slips, trips and falls that, in turn, can result in injuries such as sprained ankle.
6. Send enough clothes so your child can dress in layers. Mornings can be chilly and afternoons get quite hot. Dressing in layers allows your child to remove clothing as s/he warms while still enjoying camp.



7. Fatigue plays a part in both injuries and illnesses – and camp is a very busy place! If your child is going to a day camp, be sure they get enough rest at night. If the child will be at a resident camp, explain that camp is not like a sleepover; they need to sleep, not stay up all night!



8. Remember to send sunscreen appropriate to the camp’s geographic location and that your child has tried at home. Teach your child how to apply his/her sunscreen and how often to do so.
9. Send a reusable water bottle if not provided by the camp. Instruct your child to use it and refill it frequently during their camp stay. Staying hydrated is important to a healthy camp experience, something your child can assess by noting the color of their urine (“pee”); go for light yellow.



10. Talk with your child about telling their counselor, the nurse or camp director about problems or things that are troublesome to them at camp. These camp professionals can be quite helpful as children learn to handle being lonesome for home or cope with things such as losing something special. These helpers can’t be helpful if they don’t know about the problem – so talk to them.



11. Should something come up during the camp experience or afterward – you see an unusual rash on your child or the child shares a disturbing story – contact the camp’s representative and let them know. Camps want to partner effectively with parents; sharing information makes this possible.
12. With the impact of COVID-19, make sure to review the camp’s procedures and share with your child how camp will look different from previous years. This will be especially helpful if your child is a repeat camper. It will be important to understand the camp’s expectations for face masks, activities, food service, hand hygiene, sanitizing practices, and more. Check their website for guidance and information.

Want to learn more? Talk with your camp director. Build the partnership between you and your child’s camp leadership team. It’s one way to help your child have the best camp experience possible!

*Revision completed by nurses associated with the Healthy Camps initiative, ACA, and ACN.
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