

When should I Keep My Child Home?

Sometimes it is hard to tell if your child needs to go to school or stay home. Here are a few tips to help you make the best decision. If you need more information feel free to contact the school nurse or your child's physician or health care professional.

FEVER:

A fever is an oral temperature that is over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a warning that all is not right with the body. The best way to check is with an oral thermometer. If a thermometer is not available, check the child's forehead with the back of the hand. If it is hot, keep the child home until the temperature can be checked with a thermometer.

A child with a fever (temperature over 100 degrees) should stay at home. Please do not send your child back to school until his/her temperature is normal for at least 24 hours without medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

VOMITING:

Anytime a child vomits, he/she needs to stay home for at least 24 hours. If your child vomits during the night, keep him/her home from school the following day.

COLDS and SORE THROATS:

The common cold presents frequent problems for parents. A child with a "mild" cold or slight runny nose but otherwise feeling well may go to school. A child with a "heavy" cold, a runny nose with headache or nausea, or a deep or hacking cough belongs at home, even if he/she has no fever. If your child is too tired to concentrate on schoolwork, then the child is probably too ill to come to school.

Also, consider the color of the nasal discharge. A clear discharge is usually seen in allergies or at the onset of viral infections. A bacterial infection produces a yellow or greenish-colored discharge. Bacterial infections can be treated with antibiotics. See your physician for a diagnosis. Many children suffer from chronic low-grade sinus infections that hang on for months if untreated. Symptoms include fatigue, sore throat, especially first thing in the morning, headache, and stomachache.

If your child complains of a sore throat and has no other symptoms, he may go to school. If white or red spots can be seen in the back of the throat, or if a fever is present, keep him home and call your physician.

Please let us know if your child has Strep Throat.

RASH:

Any rash of unknown origin should be considered contagious. A rash may be the first sign of many childhood illnesses, such as chickenpox or Fifth Disease. Do not send a child with a rash to school. Your child should not return to school unless there is a letter from your child's doctor stating that the rash is not contagious or until the rash is no longer present.

Please let us know if your child has chickenpox, Fifth Disease or other communicable illness.

STOMACH ACHE:

Consult your doctor if your child has a stomachache which is persistent or severe enough to limit activity.

Please keep your child home if he/she has diarrhea or has vomited in the last 24 hours. Children should remain home until normal eating patterns have resumed.

PAIN:

Toothache: Contact your dentist.

Earache: Consult your doctor.

Headache: A child whose only complaint is a headache usually does not need to be kept home.

LICE:

Children with lice need to be isolated from other children and will be sent home from school. They will not be admitted back to school until they have been properly treated and all nits have been removed from the hair. The nurse will check your child when he/she returns to school after being treated.

Please let us know if lice are discovered on your child, so that other children in their classroom may be checked.