

SCHOOL AND ILLNESS: SHOULD YOUR CHILD STAY HOME?

Parents often have trouble knowing whether their child is too ill to go to school. The following guidelines will help you decide.

Your child is too ill to go to school if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Seems very tired and needs bed rest (this is common with flu symptoms).
- Has vomiting or diarrhea.
- Becomes short of breath or has an increase in wheezing during normal activity.
- Has a cough that interrupts his normal activity.
- Has a temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit by mouth.
- Has pain from earache, headache, sore throat, or recent injury.
- Has yellow or green drainage from eye(s),
- Breaks out in a rash

Keep your child at home if:

- Temperature is 100 degrees or above - Student must be fever free for 24 hours before coming to school. Although giving Tylenol, Advil, before school will lower your student's temperature and make him/her feel more comfortable, the temperature may rise again after the medication wears off. Fever free for 24 hours means without the aid of fever reducing medication.
- Diarrhea and /or vomiting - Do not send your student to school if he/she has vomited or had diarrhea more than two times within the last 24 hours. Vomiting and diarrhea must have subsided for at least 24 hours before the child may return to school.
- Fever, chills, muscle aches, coughing, sore throat, runny nose, congestion, headache - all are symptoms of influenza. Student is contagious 24 hours before onset of symptoms through 3 days after onset. Child should be kept home from school during the communicable period and/or for 24 hours after fever has subsided or for as long as child feels ill.
- Common cold symptoms - includes sore throat, watery and/or discolored mucousy discharge from eyes and nose, sneezing, fever, chills, generalized discomfort. Child is considered contagious 24 hours before onset of symptoms and usually for five days after. Child should be kept home from school if he/she feels ill or is running a fever.
- Strep infections - Child with fever, red throat with pus spots, tender and swollen lymph glands should be seen by a doctor. Untreated strep infections can lead to rheumatic fever or kidney involvement. Child should stay home from school until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment have been completed and/or until fever has subsided for 24 hours. Scarlet fever, a rash on skin and inside of mouth, can accompany a strep infection along with fever, nausea and vomiting. Same exclusion rules apply as with strep infection.
- Suspicious rashes - We have to assume that a rash of unknown origin may be contagious until diagnosed by a doctor. Rashes such as impetigo, scabies and ringworm are extremely contagious and the student must stay home until proper amount of treatment has been administered.
- Head lice - If you find live lice or nits in you child's hair, contact the school nurse for information regarding treatment and follow-up. Any student who has been treated for lice or has been sent home for lice treatment must be brought to school by an adult and checked by the school nurse before returning to the classroom.