

SICK CHILDREN.... send or stay home? Guidelines for Parents

Deciding when a child is too sick to go to school can be a difficult decision for parents to make. When trying to decide, use the guidelines below and seek the advice of your health care provider.

GO to school--- If your child has any of the following symptoms, they should probably go to school.

- sniffles, a mild runny nose with minimal drainage, mild cough without a fever
- vague complaints of aches, pains, or fatigue

STAY at home—If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child home, make appropriate child care arrangements or seek to make a doctor's appointment (there may be many more health issues which would merit exclusion. These are the most common).

CHICKEN POX (Varicella)	Chicken pox blisters appear in crops and are infectious until ALL blisters are dried and crusted over (usually 5-6 days after start of rash). Keep child home until no longer contagious.
COLDS	A runny nose it not necessarily cause to keep your child home. Keep them home with a runny nose AND a fever, bad cough, headache or nausea, or if the child is too tired or too uncomfortable to function at school.
DIARRHEA	Keep children home for persistent watery stools especially if the child looks or acts ill. Persistent diarrhea, especially if accompanied by fever and cramps, should be evaluated by your health care provider.
EARS	Drainage from the ear and/or ear pain should be evaluated by your health care provider. Untreated ear infections can cause temporary and/or permanent hearing loss.
EYES	Thick mucus, pus, or clear liquid draining from the eye may be contagious. One or both eyes may also appear extremely red and feel irritated, itchy, or painful. The eyelid may be swollen and the eye may be sensitive to light. Return to school when the drainage and symptoms have cleared. You may need to get a prescription for eye drops from your health care provider
FEVER	A child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Stay home for a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within the last 24 hours.
FRACTURES OR SURGERY	Please notify the school nurse for evaluation of any modifications to physical activity, length of day, or mobility needs. You may be asked to provide written information from your health care provider regarding limitations and special needs.
LICE, SCABIES	Please notify the school nurse if your child has head lice. For a noted infestation of lice and nits (eggs), your child may not return to school until they have been treated.
NASAL DISCHARGE And/or CHRONIC COUGH	These conditions may be contagious and may require treatment. Your child should be seen by your health care provider for evaluation especially if symptoms also include fever and a large amount of mucous drainage.
RASH	Any skin rash of unknown cause may be contagious or require medical treatment, especially with fever and itching. Consult with your health care provider. You may be asked to present a medical excuse from your physician stating that the rash is not contagious (or no longer contagious).
SORE THROAT	A sore throat, especially with fever or swollen neck glands may be contagious. If infected, please notify the school nurse. Return date should be discussed with the school nurse.
VOMITING	An ill child who is vomiting should remain home for 12-24hrs after the episode and until child has tolerated at least two normal meals. If related to a head injury, a vomiting child should be seen by the student's physician or in an emergency room. Please report the head injury to the school nurse.