

# Is your child too sick for school?



It's a typical school-year dilemma for parents—is their child sick enough to stay home? Not only will the child miss valuable school time, but often the parent/guardian needs to miss work, too. Please know that good health is more important than a perfect attendance record. In order for your child to be available for learning, and to control communicable diseases in school, it is important to keep your child home for the following reasons:



## **Fever**

If your child's temperature is 100.5 degrees or higher then you should keep your child at home. While at home, encourage your child to drink plenty of liquids. Your child should be **fever-free for 24 hours (without fever reduction medication like Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin))** before returning to school.



## **Mild Cough/Runny Nose**

If there's no fever, and the child feels fairly good, school is fine.



## **Bad Cough/Cold Symptoms**

Children with bad coughs need to stay home, and possibly see a doctor. It could be a severe cold or possibly bronchitis, flu, or pneumonia. But when the cough improves, and the child is feeling better, then it's back to school. Don't wait for the cough to disappear entirely—that could take a week or longer!



## **Diarrhea**

Keep your child home until the illness is over. Must be 24 hours symptom free before returning to school.



## **Vomiting**

Keep your child home until the illness is over. Child should be able to be vomit free after at least two solid meals.



## **Sore Throat**

A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be strep throat even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat in children are headache and stomach upset. Keep your child home from school and contact a doctor. Your child needs a special test to determine if it is strep throat. He or she can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.



## **Earache**

The child needs to see a doctor. It could be an ear infection or signs of another issue.



## **Red, Itchy Eye(s)/ Discharge from Eye/Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)**

Keep the child home until a doctor has given the OK to return to school and **bring in a doctor's note**. Pink eye is highly contagious, and most cases are caused by a virus, which will not respond to an antibiotic. Bacterial conjunctivitis will require an antibiotic; your doctor will be able to determine if this is the case.



## **Rash**

Children with a skin rash should see a doctor, as this could be one of several infectious diseases. One possibility is impetigo, a bacterial skin infection that is very contagious and requires antibiotic treatment. Also, fifth disease is a contagious viral illness spread by coughs and sneezes; it's no longer contagious by the time the rash appears. Others include scabies, ring worm, etc. Please **bring in a doctor's note** allowing your child to return to school.



## **Head Lice**

If child has live lice, keep your child home until treated with appropriate lice treatment. Take care to also remove all nits (eggs). Child may return to school once treatment is completed and no live lice are present. Child must be checked for lice by the school clinic personnel to ensure no live lice are present before student may be permitted to class.