



Notes from the School Nurses

A Nurse's Guide for When to Stay Home From School

Fever is the body's way of destroying the germs making it sick, and it's a common symptom of infections. Keep your children home if their temperature is 100° F or higher. Wait until children are fever-free without a fever reducing medication before letting them return to school.

Diarrhea is often the result of infection, food poisoning, or a side effect to medications like antibiotics. If your child is not having pain, not having diarrhea frequently (2 or more in 24 hours) and can make it to the bathroom and wash hands well after using the bathroom they can come to school.

Vomiting is another way for the body to rid itself of the germs making it sick, and is usually caused by a stomach virus or stomach infection. Keep children home if they've vomited twice or more in the last 24 hours. They can return to school when they are symptom free and tolerating fluids.

Sore throat can be a symptom of strep or a common cold. If your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, keep your child at home for at least 2 doses of antibiotics or 12 hours after starting antibiotics. If your child has a mild cold, sore throat with no fever it is okay to go to school.

Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) The American Academy of Pediatrics no longer recommends staying home from school for pinkeye unless a child is not able to avoid touching their eye, has a fever over 100°F or the doctor recommends they stay home.

Rashes generally are okay to attend school. You can call the school nurse to assess if you are concerned. If there is a fever with the rash keep your child home.

- **Scabies** they may return to school once the treatment is completed. They will still have itching and rash for several weeks.
- **MRSA** infections they may return as long as on treatment from a doctor and any drainage from a wound can be covered.
- **Ringworm** they can attend school. Should keep area covered by clothing or bandage.
- **Chicken Pox** they must stay home until all pox are scabbed over.
- **Impetigo** they must stay home until lesions are treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours or lesions are crusted over.
- **Hand Foot and Mouth** they can attend school unless a fever is present or child is unable to maintain good hygiene or consistently drooling

Lice we do not exclude from school, once identified, we notify the parent and the expectation is that they be combed out, treated and return to school the next day.

Earaches are not contagious. There's no need to keep a child with a mild earache home.

Mild cold or respiratory symptoms are no reason to keep children at home. A persistent productive cough may be a sign of contagious conditions such as whooping cough, viral bronchitis, pneumonia, influenza or croup and may need medical evaluation.