



When Should I Keep My Child At Home?

Many parents are faced with the decision of whether to keep their sick children home or send them to school. The way a child looks and acts can make the decision easier.

The child should not make the decision to come to school when they are ill.

The following guidelines should be considered before your child returns to school:

- **Fever**-Your child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100 degrees. They may return to school after he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (*without fever-reducing medicines such as Tylenol or Motrin/Ibuprofen*).
- **Diarrhea/Vomiting**- A child with diarrhea/vomiting should remain home and return to school when symptom-free for 24 hours.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**-A child may return to school with reddened eyes with a written physician/health department release stating they are not contagious.
- **Rash**-A child with a rash may return to school with a written physician or health department release.
- **Cold**-Consider keeping your child at home if he/she is experiencing discomfort from cold symptoms, such as nasal congestion and cough. A continuous yellowish or green discharge from the nose may be a sign of infection. Consider having the child seen by your health care provider.
- **Cough** - Significant cough that makes a child feel uncomfortable or disrupts class.
- **Head Lice**-Your child may return to school with the approval of the school nurse after they have received treatment and providing there are no live lice. They must also have a note stating the method of treatment signed by the parent.
- Any condition that you think may be serious or contagious to others.

Although school attendance is important, a sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in class as usual. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school and allows the child an opportunity to rest and recover completely from their illness. Be sure to ask your health care provider when it is safe for your child to return to school, both for your child's health and for the health of the rest of the school.

Finally, if you know your child is still running a fever, it is not a good idea simply to give them Tylenol and send them to school because as soon as the medicine wears off, you could be called by the school nurse to leave work and come pick up your child with fever.

Reminder: Please call and report any absences. Upon returning to school, bring your physician or health department release. If your child did not receive medical attention from a health care provider, a parent note with explanation for absence is required.