

WHEN TO KEEP CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL

It is sometimes hard to know when to keep your child home from school. The following is a list of signs and symptoms that might mean a child is ill. These signs also mean that a child could spread that illness to other classmates. We hope this list will help you decide when to keep your child home, as we know how hard that decision can be.

1. **Fever:** A person's normal temperature is 98.6 degrees, orally (99.6 degrees, rectally). Anything higher means your child should stay home. Fever usually means infection. Infections may be spread to others. A fever may be at its lowest first thing in the morning and rise as the day goes along. Make sure your child is completely well before sending him/her back to school after a fever.
2. **Rash:** Keep your child home unless you are sure the rash is an allergic rash (such as poison ivy). A rash may be a sign of any number of diseases that can be spread easily.
3. **Vomiting:** Healthy children don't throw up. Be sure your child has fully recovered from whatever illness has caused the vomiting before he/she goes back to school. After a bout of vomiting, he/she should be able to keep down clear liquids and then a light meal. Allow a few hours. Then, if your child is still able to eat, he/she should be able to return to school.
4. **Runny Nose:** A nose which runs clear, watery liquid may be due to allergies. This is not "catching". A nose which has a thick colored (yellow, green or brown) discharge means there could be an infection. The child should be kept home until it clears. It should help to give the child a lot to drink and a decongestant.
5. **Cough:** A cough that lingers and/or is deep, should be considered contagious. Your child should be kept home.
6. **Sore Throat:** If your child has a fever, a cough, or a thick runny nose along with a sore throat, he/she should stay home. If the sore throat stays for more than a day or two, your child should be kept home.
7. **Reddened Eyes:** A child with a white, thick drainage should be kept home until treatment has begun. This may go along with redness in the white of the eye.

To help reduce the spread of germs your child should:

1. Cover their nose and mouth during a cough or sneeze
2. Wash their hands carefully and often
3. Try not to share forks, cups or drinking glasses with other children
4. Clean cuts and scratches and cover them with a Band-Aid.

It is very important that we all work together to lessen the chances that our children will become ill. Of course, we will call you if your child seems to get ill at school, so that you can take care of him/her.