

General Guidelines For Keeping Children Home From School Due to Illness

It is sometimes difficult to decide when and how long to keep an ill child home from school. The timing of the absence is often important in order to decrease the spread of disease to others and to prevent your child from acquiring any other illness while his/her resistance is lowered. The following guidelines represent the more common childhood illnesses and the usual recommendations of the School Nursing Services.

CHICKEN POX

A skin rash consisting of small blisters which leave scabs. A slight fever may or may not be present. There may be blisters and scabs present at the same time. Your child should remain home until all blisters have scabbed over, usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the first crop of blisters.

COMMON COLD

Irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes, sneezing, chills and general body discomfort. **Your child should remain home if symptoms are serious enough to interfere with your child's ability to learn.** Medical care should be obtained if symptoms persist beyond 7-10 days, fever develops, or discharge becomes yellow to green.

FEVER

If your child's temperature is 99.6 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, he/she should remain home until he/she has been without fever for a full 24 hours. Remember, fever is a symptom indicating the presence of an illness.

FLU

Abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache, and sore muscles. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. **Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and the child is without fever for 24 hours.**

HEAD LICE

Lice are small grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits firmly attached to the hair shafts, close to the scalp. Nits are much easier to see and detect than lice. They are small white specks which are usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Following lice infestation, your child may return to school after receiving treatment with a pediculicide shampoo and all nits have been removed. **We have a no nit policy.**

IMPETIGO

Blister-like lesions which later develop into crusted pus-like sores. **Your child should remain home from school until receiving 48 hours of antibiotic therapy and sores are no longer draining.**

(PLEASE TURN OVER FOR MORE INFORMATION)

PAIN

If your child complains, or behavior indicates, that he/she is experiencing persistent pain, he/she should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school.

PINK EYE

Redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching, matter coming from one or both eyes, or crusts on the eyelids. **Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and discharge from the eyes has stopped.** Spread of infection can be minimized by keeping the hands away from the face, good hand-washing practices, using individual washcloths and towels, and **NOT** touching any part of the eyes with the tip of the medication applicator while administering the antibiotic ointment.

SKIN RASHES

Skin rashes of unknown origin **should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school.**

STREP THROAT AND SCARLET FEVER

Strep throat begins with fever, sore and red throat, pus spots on the back of the throat, and tender swollen glands of the neck. With scarlet fever there are all the symptoms of strep throat as well as a strawberry appearance to the tongue and rash of the skin. High fever, nausea, and vomiting may also occur. **Your child should remain home from school; until receiving a full 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and until without fever or vomiting for 24 hours.** Most physicians will advise rest at home 1-3 days after a strep infection.

Antibiotics ordered for strep infections are to be taken for 10 days or until all medication is gone. Only when these directions are followed correctly is the strep germ completely eliminated from the body, no matter how well the child feels after the first few days of receiving medication.

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA (INTESTINAL VIRAL INFECTIONS)

Stomach ache, cramping, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. **Your child should remain at home until without vomiting, diarrhea, or fever for a full 24 hours. If your child has had any of these symptoms during the night he/she should not be sent to school the following day.**

PLEASE KEEP THESE GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

**CONSULT YOUR PHYSICIAN FOR THE MOST ACCURATE
DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT**