

SICK CHILDREN.....send to school or stay home?

Deciding when a child is too sick to go to school can be a difficult decision for parents to make. When trying to decide, use the guidelines below and seek the advice of your health care provider.

Go to school – If your child has any of the following symptoms, they should probably go to school:

- Sniffles, a runny nose, and a mild cough without a fever.
- Vague complaints of aches, pains or fatigue.
- A single episode of diarrhea or vomiting without any other complaints.

Stay at home – If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home or make appropriate child care arrangements:

<i>CHICKENPOX (Varicella)</i>	Chickenpox blisters appear in crops and are infectious until ALL blisters are dried and crusted over (usually 5-6 days after start of rash). Only then can children return to school.
<i>COLDS</i>	Runny nose by itself is not necessarily cause to keep your child home. Keep them home with runny nose AND a fever, bad cough, headache or nausea, or if the child is too tired or too uncomfortable to function at school.
<i>DIARRHEA</i>	Keep children home for three (3) or more watery stools in a 24 hour period, especially if the child acts or looks ill. Persistent diarrhea, especially if accompanied by fever and cramps, should be evaluated by your health care provider.
<i>EARS</i>	Drainage from the ear and/or ear pain should be evaluated by your health care provider. Untreated ear infections can cause temporary and/or permanent hearing loss.
<i>EYES</i>	Thick mucus, pus, or clear liquid draining from the eye may be contagious. One or both eyes may also appear extremely red and feel irritated, itchy, or painful. The eyelid may be swollen and the eye may be sensitive to light. Return to school when drainage and symptoms have cleared.
<i>FEVER</i>	A child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Stay home for a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within the last 24 hours.
<i>FRACTURES OR SURGERY</i>	Notify the school health clinic of any modifications to physical activity, length of day, mobility or transportation needs. You may be asked to provide written information from your health care provider regarding limitations and special needs.
<i>LICE, SCABIES</i>	Children may not return to school until they have been treated and are free of lice and nits (eggs). Notify the school health clinic if your child has head lice.
<i>NASAL DISCHARGE (greenish) AND/OR CHRONIC COUGH</i>	These conditions may be contagious and require treatment. Your child should be seen by your health care provider.
<i>RASH</i>	Any skin rash of unknown cause is considered contagious, especially with fever and itching. To return to school the rash must be gone, or you must present a medical excuse stating that the rash is not contagious.
<i>SORE THROAT</i>	A sore throat, especially with fever or swollen glands in the neck may be contagious. If strep throat, the child may return to school after 24 hours of appropriate treatment, if there is no fever, and they feel physically well enough.
<i>VOMITING</i>	Anytime a child vomits two (2) or more times, they need to be isolated from other children for 24 hours. If it happens during the night, keep them home the following day.