

## Should I keep my child at home?



When your child wakes up and says "I feel too sick to go to school today", it can be difficult to decide what to do. Here are some guidelines to help you make that decision.

First of all remember that your child's attendance is very important to your child's success at school. Too many absences will make it hard to keep up with his/her schoolwork. However, there are health concerns that make it necessary to keep your child at home. Children who have the following symptoms should stay home.

### FEVER

You should have a thermometer available to check your child's temperature. If a fever is over 100 degrees, do not send your child to school. Your child is likely contagious plus they need to stay home to rest and get better. Coming to school sick not only exposes other children to the illness, but also makes it more difficult for your child's body to fight the illness. **Children should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

### VOMITING/DIARRHEA

If the vomiting or diarrhea happens more than once, your child should stay home. Even if these problems happen only one time before school starts, and your child feels better, it is smart to keep them home for a few hours. Then you can watch them to see if it happens again before making the decision to send them on to school.

## SKIN RASHES

Anytime a rash is associated with fever, the child should stay at home until the fever is gone. If the rash has any fluid or pus coming from it, the child must stay out of school until the rash has been treated (and a doctor's note states it is okay to attend school) or until the rash is gone, dried up, or scabbed over.

Sometimes a rash is part of a contagious disease like chicken pox. Sometimes a rash is not contagious, but allergic and itchy and uncomfortable. Your child will get through the school day in a happier manner if you send appropriate medication such as an antihistamine (following the medication policy).

## RED EYES ESPECIALLY WITH DRAINAGE OR CRUSTING AROUND THE EYE(S)

This may mean your child has pinkeye, or conjunctivitis. The conjunctivitis may be due to an allergic response if your child has allergies or may be due to contacts left in too long. If not, it is probably bacterial conjunctivitis or pinkeye and will require either antibiotic drops or several days at home to heal. Your child will not be allowed to stay in school with an untreated contagious pinkeye.

## HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS) OR SCABIES

These small insects cause uncomfortable and itchy skin conditions. State law requires that students with these conditions stay out of school until treated with an appropriate shampoo or lotion. You should notify your school nurse if your child has been treated for head lice or scabies. You may want to discuss other treatment questions with your child's nurse such as washing bed linens, carpet vacuuming, etc.

Children who are truly sick will heal faster when they stay home to get plenty of rest and appropriate fluids and healthy nutrition.

This also protects their classmates from the exposure to the germs causing the illness. Please feel free to contact your school nurse if you have any questions. We will always do our best to decide about sending your child to school based on our experience and education. We want your child to be healthy, safe, and a success at school!

