

# When to keep children home from school

Deciding when to keep a child home from school can be a difficult decision. It is important that children attend school. For some, a sick child may mean missing work. If your child is ill please notify the office no later than 8:45 a.m.

The following information may help you decide when to keep your child at home. For any COVID related questions/concerns please refer to the COVID decision tree.

**This information does not take the place of consulting a medical provider.**

| Symptom:              | Description:  | When to keep a child home from school:  |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Cough                 | A mild cough often starts after the first few days of a cold. A child with mild symptoms , no fever and otherwise feeling well may be fine to attend school. However, any child with a consistent cough may be required to wear a mask. | A child with a cough and fever must stay home from school for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines (Tylenol or Ibuprofen).  |
| Diarrhea/<br>Vomiting |   | Children who have vomited or have had diarrhea should be kept home until symptom and fever free for 24 hours.   |
| Ear ache              | Consult a medical provider for ear aches, as they may require medical treatment.  | A child should be kept home until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.  |
| Fever                 | A Fever is a common symptom of viral and bacterial infections. A fever is a temperature of 100 F orally or 99 F axillary or higher.   | Any child with a fever should not attend school. If an antibiotic was prescribed for a bacterial infection they should not return to school until 24 hours after the first dose has been taken, as well as being fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. |
| Headache              | A child whose only  |   |

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|                           | complaint is a mild headache (and no fever) usually does not need to stay home from school. Complaints of frequent or more severe headaches should be evaluated by a medical provider.                      |   |
| Pink Eye (conjunctivitis) | A common infectious disease of one or both eyes caused by several types of bacteria and viruses.<br>(red watery eyes without discharge is not considered conjunctivitis and is not a reason for exclusion). | Any child with red eyes/eyelids with thick white or yellow discharge and eye pain should be evaluated by a medical provider. The child may return to school after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours unless a doctor has diagnosed a noninfectious conjunctivitis ( a note from the medical provider will be required) |
| Sore throat               | A child with a mild sore throat, no fever and otherwise feeling well is able to attend school.  | Any child diagnosed with strep throat or other bacterial infection may return to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics and has been fever free for 23 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.   |
| Flu                       | The flu is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza viruses and can cause mild to severe illness.  | Those with either confirmed or suspected flu symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours, even if prescribed antiviral medication. They may return to school when symptom and fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.  |

**Frequent complaints:** Sometimes children pretend or exaggerate illness in order to stay home. However, frequent complaints of tummy aches, headaches, and other symptoms may be a physical sign that a child is feeling emotionally stressed. Consult a medical provider to evaluate symptoms. Stress-based complaints cause some children to unnecessarily miss a great deal of school. It is important to check often with your children about how things are going. Share concerns with their teachers and other support staff so that we can support you and your child. It is our goal to make attending school a fun and positive learning experience.