

School and Illness: Should Your Child Stay Home?

The following guidelines will help you decide whether your child is too ill to go to school.

Child Is Too Ill

Your child is too ill to go to school if he or she has any of these signs:

- Seems **very** tired and needs bed rest (this is common with flu symptoms)
- Has vomiting or diarrhea
- Becomes short of breath or is wheezing
- Has a cough that disrupts normal activity
- Has distracting pain from earache, headache, sore throat or recent injury
- Has yellow or green drainage from eye(s)
- Breaks out in a rash; not all rashes require that a child stay home from school. Check with your child's doctor.

Fever

Your child should not go to school if his temperature is above 100.5°F. He may return to school when he is feeling better.

Contagious Disease

- Your child should stay home from school if he has a contagious disease. A contagious disease is one that can be spread by close contact with a person or object. Examples are: chickenpox, flu, vomiting, diarrhea, colds, strep throat and "pinkeye." A disease may be contagious **before the child shows signs of illness**. It is very hard to prevent the spread of some germs, especially in a school classroom. Good hand washing will help prevent the spread of germs.
- If your child has chickenpox or strep throat, ask your doctor when he may return to school. Generally, children who have active chickenpox should not return to school until all the lesions are dried and crusted. Children with strep throat should be on antibiotics for 24 hours and feeling well enough to concentrate.

Remember

- School is a child's work. It is important for normal development. If your child is absent often, it may be harder to keep up with the class. It is important your child does not miss more than a few days of school a year due to illness.
- Ask your doctor if you are not sure about keeping your child home.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse.