







## WHEN TO KEEP SICK CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
						
Temperature of 100 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Body rash with itching or fever	Itchy head, active head lice	Redness, itching and/or "crusty" drainage from eye.	Hospital stay and/or ER visit

I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM...						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication i.e. Tylenol, Motrin	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Free from rash, itching, or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided by the county health office	Evaluated by my doctor and have a note to return to school	Released by my medical provider to return to school

*Information compiled from CDC (Centers for Disease Control); DHSS Deciding when to keep a sick child home from school is not always easy. Regular school attendance is important. But when a child is truly sick, they need to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and to prevent spreading illness to others. The following information may help you decide when to keep your child at home. This information does not take the place of consulting a medical provider. See below for "When to contact a medical provider".*

## **COMMON COLD**

The common cold is a contagious upper respiratory infection caused by cold viruses. Symptoms can last 7 to 14 days. A child with no fever, mild symptoms and otherwise feeling well may be fine at school.

### **WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:**

A child with heavy cold symptoms such as deep or uncontrollable coughing or significant lack of energy belongs at home even without a fever.

## **FLU (INFLUENZA)**

The flu is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses and can cause mild to severe illness. A person with influenza can be contagious up to one week after symptoms appear.

### **WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:**

A child with flu-like illness (fever and cough) must stay home from school for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicine. A fever is defined as a temperature of 100°F or higher. If symptoms occur while at school, the student must be picked up as soon as possible to go home. Contact a medical provider with severe symptoms.

## **COUGH**

A mild hacking cough often starts after the first few days of a common cold. A child with mild symptoms, no fever and otherwise feeling well may be fine at school.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** A child with deep or uncontrollable coughing belongs at home even without a fever. A child with a cough and fever should stay home from school for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

## **VOMITING/DIARRHEA**

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Vomiting or diarrhea two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition.

## **FEVER**

Fevers are a common symptom of viral and bacterial infection. Children are likely to be contagious to others when they have a fever.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Any child with a fever of 100°F or higher should not attend school and should not return until they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

## **SORE THROAT**

A child with a mild sore throat, no fever and otherwise feeling well may be fine to attend school.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Keep a child at home and contact a medical provider for a severe sore throat and/or if white spots are seen in the back of the throat, with or without a fever.

## **STREP THROAT**

A significantly sore throat could be strep throat, a contagious illness. Other symptoms may include fever, white spots in the back of the throat, headache and upset stomach. Untreated strep throat can lead to serious complications.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Keep your child home from school with the above symptoms and contact a medical provider. A child diagnosed with strep throat is no longer infectious and can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started.

## **IMPETIGO**

Impetigo is a contagious bacterial skin infection that usually begins with small fluid filled blisters that cause a honey-colored crust on skin after bursting. It is important to have these symptoms evaluated by a medical provider because untreated infection can lead to serious complications. 24 hours after starting prescribed antibiotics, impetigo is no longer contagious.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Students may attend school if drainage can be effectively kept covered and is not extensive.

## **PINK EYE**

(Conjunctivitis) is a common infectious disease of one or both eyes caused by several types of bacteria and viruses. The eye typically appears very red and feels irritated. There may be drainage of mucus and pus or clear liquid. Prescription medication may be needed to treat bacterial infection. Virus-caused pink eye will not need antibiotic treatment.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** A child with the above symptoms should be kept at home until evaluated by a medical provider and return to school with or without treatment depending on the diagnosis.

## **RASHES**

A rash may be one of the first signs of a contagious childhood illness such as chickenpox. Rashes may cover the entire body or be in only one area and are most contagious in the early stages.

**WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:** Do not send a child with a rash to school until a medical provider has said it is safe to do so – especially with additional symptoms like itching, fever or appearing ill.

## **WHEN TO CONTACT A MEDICAL PROVIDER:**

In children, emergency warning signs for flu-like illness that need urgent medical attention include:

Fast breathing or trouble breathing

Bluish or gray skin color

Not drinking enough fluids

Severe or persistent vomiting

Not waking up or interacting

Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held

Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

## **Other reasons to contact a medical provider include but are not exclusive to:**

When a child looks or acts really sick, with or without a fever

Cold symptoms for longer than 10-14 days or getting sicker or a there is a fever after the first few days

Chronic coughing; uncontrollable coughing; wheezing

Rashes; eye drainage; earache; toothache