

Is My Child Sick Enough To Stay Home?

A difficult decision must be made by parents of school-age children when a child complains of not feeling well on a school day. The parent must decide whether the child stays home or goes to school. What is a parent to do? How can you be sure that you make the right choice. You don't want to keep the child home if he/she really isn't sick, but you also don't want to send a sick child to school. This information is not intended as medical advice, but can be used as guidelines to be followed until your doctor can be contacted for his/her opinion.



Fever

A fever indicates that there is a problem in the body. The best way to check for fever is with a thermometer, which every home should have. No child with a temperature over 100 degrees should be sent to school. If a thermometer is not available, check the child's forehead with the back of the hand. If it is hot, keep the child home and have the child's temperature taken with a thermometer. A child must not return to school until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours.

Cold, Sore Throat, or Cough

The common cold is a frequent malady in children. A child very congested with a hacking cough belongs home in bed, even without a fever. A child with a sore throat, but no other symptoms, may go to school. If however, white spots are on the throat or a temperature is present, the doctor should be contacted.

Rash

A rash may be the first symptom of a childhood illness, such as 5th's disease or chicken pox. A rash, or "spots" may cover all of the body or may only be in one area. Do not send your child to school with a rash, unless your doctor has determined that it is not contagious.

Stomach Ache, Vomiting, or Diarrhea

In general complaining of only a stomach ache, without other symptoms is not reason in itself to keep a child home from school. If vomiting or diarrhea occurs, the child should stay home. The child may return to school after the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours. If any of these symptoms do not improve, worsen or consistently reoccur, your doctor should be notified.

Pain



Toothache-Notify your dentist

Earache-May seek physician advice

Headache-A headache as the only symptom is not reason for a child to stay home. If the headache consistently reoccurs, a reason should be sought, such as the need for glasses.

Children need to be in school for learning to occur, but at the same time they cannot learn if they are ill. Unnecessary absence from school may affect a student's attitude, work habits, and progress. Use this information as a guide. A call to the school nurse is another resource that can be utilized to help you decide.

Should I send my child to school?

Keep in mind **sick** children belong at home and **well** children belong in school.