

# Your Child: Too Sick for School?

## 3 Questions to Ask About Your Sick Child

To know whether your child should stay home from school, the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests answering these three quick questions:

1. Does your child have a fever? Fevers of 100° F or more are generally a sign of illness, so children should stay home from school.
2. Is your child well enough to engage in class? If ill kids seem too run down to get much out of school, keep them home.
3. Do you think your child has something other kids can get, such as the flu or pinkeye? If so, keep them at home until they can no longer give it to other kids.

## When Children Should Stay Home From School

- **Fever** Keep your children home if their temperature is 100° F or higher. Wait until children are fever-free for 24 hours, without help of an over the counter medicine, before letting them return to school
- **Diarrhea** Keep children home until stools are formed and your doctor gives the okay. Make sure your sick child stays well hydrated.
- **Vomiting** Keep children home if they've vomited twice or more in the last 24 hours. They can return to school after symptoms clear up or your doctor says they're no longer contagious.
- **Severe cough and cold** symptoms should keep kids home from school. A serious cough could be a sign of contagious conditions. Call your doctor.
- **Sore throats** can be a symptom of strep or a common cold. If your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, keep your child at home for at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
- **Pinkeye (conjunctivitis)** is contagious, and children should stay home from school for the first 24 hours after treatment begins. Symptoms of pinkeye include eye redness, irritation, swelling, and pus.
- **Headaches** can be a symptom of contagious conditions. Opinions differ on whether a child should be kept home. If your child doesn't have any other signs of illness, and feels okay, your child can go to school. (See number 2. above)

- **Rashes** that are spreading can be the sign of contagious conditions. Children should be kept home until they're diagnosed. They can return to school after symptoms are gone or their doctor gives the okay.
- **Earaches** aren't contagious. There's no need to keep a child with a mild earache home, as long as your child feels well enough to concentrate. (See number 2)
- **Mild cold or respiratory symptoms** are no reason to keep children at home so long as their nasal drainage is clear and their cough is mild and infrequent.

## Prevention is the best way to stay healthy!!

To help stop the spread of germs,

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put your used tissue in the wastebasket.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap scrubbed on the hands for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Thank-you for working together to keep our school and community healthy!!

Jamie Trebiatewski RN-BSN  
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This information is not a substitute for medical evaluation. Consult your doctor for health concerns.

Davis, J.; Fries, W.; Bhargava, H MD (March 26, 2012). Your Child: Too Sick for School?. Retrieved from [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (September 27, 2010). Cover Your Cough. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

