

SCHOOL AND ILLNESS: Should Your Child Stay Home?

It is often hard to decide whether your child is too ill to go to school. In general, children should stay home if illness keeps them from enjoying the usual activities of the child. Children should also be kept at home if the illness requires more care than providers can give without affecting the health and safety of other children in their care. The list below follows Ohio's child care rules from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

CHILD IS TOO ILL

Your child is too ill to be in school if he or she has any of these symptoms:

- ☐ Seems very tired and needs bed rest (a common flu symptom)
- ☐ Vomits more than 1 time, or has vomiting plus other signs of illness
- ☐ Diarrhea (3 or more loose, watery, unformed stools in 24 hours - not caused by a change in diet or medicine), especially if it runs out of the underwear.
- ☐ Cough that interrupts his normal play or sleep.

FEVER

Your child should not go to school if his temperature is 100°F and above. He may go back to school or daycare when it is a normal temperature for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Your child should not go to school if he has any of the following:

- ☐ Shortness of breath or increased wheezing during normal activity
- ☐ Pain from an earache, headache, sore throat or recent injury
- ☐ White or yellow eye discharge with pink or red skin inside the eyelid
- ☐ Rash with a fever or change in behavior
- ☐ Mouth sores along with drooling, unless the doctor decides that the child is not contagious.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

A contagious disease is one that spreads by close contact with a person or object. Nearly all illnesses are contagious; however, not all illnesses are a danger to other children and staff in the schools. **Many illnesses can be spread 24 hours before the child shows signs of illness.** For this reason, keeping a child out of school may do little to keep other children from getting sick. Germs are everywhere, especially in the school setting. Proper hand-washing, as well as cleaning and disinfecting toys and surfaces are still the best ways to stop the spread of illness. Some illnesses require children to stay away from school:

- ☐ Lice and scabies – no school until after the first treatment
- ☐ Impetigo – no school for 24 hours after treatment starts
- ☐ Strep throat or other strep infections – no school for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started and when fever is gone
- ☐ Pink eye (conjunctivitis) - no school for 24 hours after antibiotic eye drops are started

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