

SHOULD THEY STAY OR SHOULD THEY GO? (TO SCHOOL)

All information compiled from CDC (Center for Disease Control) and
ISDH (Indiana State Department of Health)

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Deciding when to keep your child home from school can often be a tricky decision. Unfortunately, it can place a hardship on daily plans and work schedules, but as a parent, it is always a good idea to have a backup plan. It is important for your child to attend school, however, if they are truly ill, they need to stay home in order to recover and prevent spreading the illness to other students and staff.

Please keep the school office updated with current phone numbers so you or an alternate emergency contact can be reached at all times in the case of an illness or injury.

The following information may be helpful in deciding where your child should spend the day. Please Note: This does NOT take the place of consulting a Medical Provider-please see below for "When To Contact a Medical Provider".

FEVER: Fevers are common to both bacterial and viral infections. Children are likely contagious to others when they have a fever. If you do not own a thermometer, feel your child's forehead with your hand-if it is much warmer than usual, they probably have a fever. Please do not give your child fever-reducing medication and then send them to school. The medication will wear off, the fever will more than likely return, and you will need to pick them up anyway.

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 medications. A child with flu-like symptoms (fever and cough) must stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.

COUGH: A mild hacking cough often starts after the first few days of the

common cold. A child with **mild** symptoms, no fever, and otherwise feeling well, may be well at school.

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

HEADACHES: If your child's only complaint is a mild headache, they usually do not need to stay home from school. An weight-based, accurate dose of Tylenol or Ibuprofen will usually take care of the complaint. Complaints of frequent, or more severe headaches should be evaluated by a medical provider, including, but not limited to a vision exam if needed.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: A child with a significant headache with or without a fever belongs at home until feeling better.

EARACHE: Consult a medical provider for earaches. Ear infections most often require medical treatment.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: A child should stay home until they are pain-free.

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

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: Keep your child home and contact a medical provider for a severe sore throat and 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 include fever, headache, upset stomach and white spots in the back of the throat. **Untreated Strep Throat can lead to serious complications.**

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: Keep your child home and contact a medical provider. A child diagnosed with Strep Throat is no longer considered infectious and can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.

STOMACH PAIN:

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: Consult a medical provider and do not send your child to school with a stomachache that is persistent or severe enough to limit activity, such as walking, jumping, running. If vomiting or diarrhea occurs, keep your child home until he/she is symptom-free for 24 hours.

DIARRHEA/VOMITING: Stomach viruses are very contagious. If your child vomits at school, he/she will need to be picked up regardless if they have a fever or not.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: If your child vomits or has multiple cases of diarrhea prior to school, please do not send your child to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

PINK EYE (CONJUNCTIVITIS): Pink Eye is a common infectious disease of one or both eyes caused by several types of bacteria and viruses. Your child will typically wake up in the morning with a crusty eyelid, reddened and itchy/irritated feeling in his/her eye. There may be cloudy or clear drainage from his/her eye as well. Viral Pinkeye will not require antibiotic treatment, however Bacterial Pinkeye will.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: A child with above-listed symptoms should be kept home and evaluated by a medical provider. **If your child is diagnosed with Bacterial Pinkeye and antibiotic eye drops are prescribed, they can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic therapy has begun.** If your child is diagnosed with Viral Pinkeye, they are able to return to school the next day.

RASHES: A rash may be one of the first signs of a contagious illness. Rashes may cover the entire body or be in one area and are most contagious in the early stages.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: Do not send a child to school until a medical provider has said it is safe to do so, especially if the rash is accompanied by itching, fever or appearing ill.

TOOTHACHE: For tooth pain, contact a dentist to have your child evaluated as soon as possible.

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: A child with significant toothache should not attend school until feeling better.

HEAD LICE: Head lice are tiny parasites that live only on human scalps and hair.

They do not cause illness or carry diseases. An itchy scalp is the most common symptom. Adult lice are reddish brown, about the size of a sesame seed and can be hard to see. Lice lay nits (eggs) on strands of hair close to the scalp. Nits are easier to see than lice. They look like tiny tan or white dots and are firmly attached to the hair shaft. Nits can usually be seen near the scalp behind the ears, at the nape of the neck and under bangs. The most important step for getting rid of head lice is daily careful nit removal for at least 14 days using a special lice comb and by "nit picking".

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL: If you identify head lice on your child, please keep your child home until they have been treated with either an over the counter or prescription head lice treatment. If live lice is identified on your child at school, you will need to come pick your child up, treat for head lice, and have your child cleared by the School Nurse prior to your child returning to school. Keep in mind, hair is not the only item that needs treated. Please treat all bed linens, laundry, coats, hair brushes, stuffed animals, couches, vehicles and beds as recommended. Stop by the school office for a packet on head lice prevention, identification and treatment or visit the CDC's website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>



Magnified Head Lice



Nits on hair shaft



Size compared to a penny

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMON COLDS AND THE FLU

COMMON COLD

The common cold is a contagious upper respiratory infection caused by cold viruses. It is the most frequent childhood illness. 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. See additional information on **fever, sore throat and influenza**

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. Contact a medical provider with severe symptoms,

Symptoms: gradually	Come on	Symptoms: quickly	Come on
Fever:	Rare in adults and older children, but can be as high as 102 in infants and small children	Fever: high 4-7 days	Typically as as 102, but can rise to 104 and usually lasts
Cough: cough	Mild, hacking	Cough: can severe	Often, be
Runny Nose: Often		Runny Nose: Sometimes	
Sneezing: Often		Sneezing: Sometimes	
Muscle Aches:		Muscle Aches:	Usual and

Mild	can severe	be
Tiredness/Weakness: Mild	Tiredness/Weakness:	Often
Headache: Rare	Headache: severe	Sudden onset, can be
Vomiting/Diarrhea: Never	Vomiting/Diarrhea:	Sometimes

WHEN TO CONTACT A MEDICAL PROVIDER:

Be sure to contact a medical provider any time there is a concern about your child's health.

★ In children, emergency warning signs for flu-like illness that needs urgent medical attention includes:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Blue 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 held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

★ Other reasons to contact a medical provider include, but are not limited to:

- When a child looks or acts very sick with or without a fever
- Cold symptoms for longer than 10-14 days
- Worsening cold after 10-14 days
- Fever after the first few days of cold symptoms
- Chronic coughing, uncontrollable coughing, wheezing
- Rashes, Eye drainage, Earache, Toothache