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Tips from the School Health Office

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME WITH ILLNESS

Sometimes it can be difficult for a parent to decide whether to send children to school when they wake up with complaints that they do not feel well. However, there are some situations in which it is best to plan on keeping your child home.

- Persistent fever greater than 100° under the armpit, 101° orally, or 102° rectally (without fever reducing medication such as Tylenol)
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours, especially if accompanied by poor appetite, diarrhea, or fever
- Diarrhea or loose stools that cannot be controlled, that are bloody, or that spill out of underpants or diapers, or a diagnosis from a physician of an infectious cause until cleared by the physician to return to school
- Child is too sleepy or ill to stay in class all day or profit from program activities
- Significant cough that makes a child feel uncomfortable or disrupts the class
- Difficulty breathing, persistent crying, or significant irritability
- Sore throat accompanied by fever, rash, and/or feeling ill, that lasts longer than 48 hours, or a physician confirmed diagnosis of strep throat until 24 hours after treatment has started
- Honey-crusted sores around the nose or mouth; any wet or weeping sores; or a physician confirmed diagnosis of impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has started.
- Rash accompanied by other symptoms of illness such as fever or behavioral changes, until a physician confirms it is not contagious.
- Red, runny eyes that are painful, severely itchy, red or swollen eyelids, or distract a child from learning
- Large amount of discolored nasal discharge especially if the child is feeling ill or has a fever
- Severe ear pain or drainage from the ear
- Severe headache, especially if accompanied by fever or rash
- Persistent abdominal pain for more than 2 hours or associated with fever, dehydration, or feeling very ill.
- Any condition that you think may be serious, contagious to others, or that would prevent your child from staying in class, participating comfortably in activities, or that may interfere with learning.

Please contact your private provider for specific questions about your child, or your School Nurse for general questions.

Resource: *American Academy of Pediatrics Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, A Quick Reference Guide*, 2nd Edition, Aronson, SS. Shope, TR. 2009.