

When Should your Child Stay Home from School?



General Guidelines for When not to Report to School

Good attendance at school is important in order for a child to do well. However, there will be times when your child is really too ill to attend. Either they are contagious to the other students or they feel so poorly that they would gain nothing from being at school. The following symptoms can help you determine whether your child should stay home.

Awaiting Results of a Strep Throat Culture

Rather than exposing your child's classmates to infection, wait until 24-hour culture results are in before returning your student to school. If it is negative, and your child is fever free, you can always bring your child in late.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Following a diagnosis of conjunctivitis, the child may not return to school until 24 hours after the first dose of prescribed medication is administered.

Diarrhea and vomiting

If your child has repeated episodes of diarrhea and vomiting, accompanied by fever, a rash or general weakness, consult a doctor and keep your child out of school until the illness passes.

Head Lice

Students determined to have head lice or the presence of adult lice or eggs (nits) are not permitted in school until there are no live lice detected or majority of the nits are gone.

Fever

Children who have a temperature of 100 degrees or more do not belong in school. Any fever within the past 24 hours indicates the need to stay home. For example, at bedtime your youngster has a fever of 101 degrees but in the morning awakens with a temperature of 97.6. Keep your child home to recover.

Fever is an important symptom; when it occurs along with a sore throat, an earache, nausea, listlessness, or a rash, your child may be carrying something very contagious. **Most pediatricians advise parents to keep children home for an additional 24 hours after the fever has passed (without giving fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin).**

Rash

Children with undiagnosed rashes are not allowed in school. A doctor should be consulted for a diagnosis.

Runny nose/Cold Symptoms

A bad cough or cold symptoms can indicate a severe cold, bronchitis, flu or even pneumonia. Some children suffer one cold after another all winter long and a run-of-the-mill cold should not be a reason to miss school. However, if your child is not acting "right" or has difficulty breathing, it could be serious. Check with your pediatrician right away.

You Suspect Any Type of Illness/Infection

Should your child have symptoms of illness not mentioned here which may or may not be contagious, feel free to call the school nurse to run the symptoms by her when deciding whether to send your child to school, 881-0581.

A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows the child opportunity to rest and recover.

Information adapted from <http://www.ahisd.net/campuses/Cambridge/nurse/childstayhome.html>.