

Making the Right Choice

Sick Day Guidelines

The decision to keep your child home from school when he or she is sick can be a difficult one. No parent wants to interrupt their child's learning, and for some, keeping a child home means missing work or losing pay. However, if he or she has an illness, it is important for them to stay home from school! By taking this step you can help your child get better faster as well as prevent the spread of illness to others. Following are guidelines to help in this decision making process.

Keep your child home if he or she:

*Has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher IN THE LAST 24 HOURS

*Has been vomiting or has diarrhea IN THE LAST 24 HOURS

*Has symptoms that prevent him or her from participating in school, such as:

-Excessive tiredness or lack of appetite

-Productive coughing, sneezing

-Headache, body aches, earache

-Sore throat – severe

(minor sore throat is usually not a problem but a severe sore throat could be strep even without fever. Contact your doctor-a special test is needed to determine if it is strep throat.)

Keep your child home until the fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication. (Meaning no Tylenol, Advil, Motrin or anything that reduces a fever)

It is important to know the difference between cold and flu. Flu is a serious illness, and children who have the flu should ALWAYS stay home from school. Flu symptoms include fever, along with chills, cough, sore throat, headache or muscle aches. Many people describe it "like being hit by a truck." It is a good idea to contact the child's doctor if he or she has these symptoms. Symptoms of a common cold include stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat and hacking cough. Often, cold symptoms come on gradually, while flu symptoms may come on suddenly. Although the common cold is usually not serious, if the symptoms are severe, it's a good idea to keep your child home to rest and get better.