



## GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SICK CHILDREN HOME

Many families have questions about the decision to keep children home from school when they are ill. Please use the following as guidelines in determining whether to send your child to school. The following information is not intended to take the place of your pediatrician's advice, but to provide guidelines to be followed until your doctor can be contacted for his/her opinion.

- **Fever:** The best way to check for a fever is with a thermometer. A child with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher *by mouth* should be kept at home. They should NOT return to school until they have been without a fever for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- **Cold/Sore Throat/Cough:** The common cold is a frequent problem for children. A child with a persistent, dry, hacking cough belongs at home, even though they may not present a fever. If white spots can be seen in the back of the throat or fever is present, keep him/her home and call your doctor. If strep throat is diagnosed, the child needs to be on antibiotics for 24 hours **before** returning to school.
- **Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Consult your doctor if your child has a stomachache that is persistent or severe enough to limit his/her activity. Children should stay home until they have been **free** of vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours and until he/she can keep fluids and food down.
- **Rash:** A rash may be the first sign of one of the many childhood illnesses, such as chicken pox. A rash may cover the entire body or may appear only in one area. If a rash is present, your child should see a doctor to determine whether it is infectious before he/she can return to school.

When your child is ill, be sure to provide plenty of rest and fluids. Teach them to use tissues and dispose of them immediately. **HANDWASHING** is the single most important method of preventing the spread illness. Be sure both healthy and ill family members get into the habit of washing hands with soap and water several times a day, especially after using the bathroom and before eating. Remind children to keep their hands away from their face as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

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