

When is your child too sick for school or daycare?



As a parent or caregiver, it is difficult to know when a sick child should stay home from school or daycare. Keeping your sick child home stops the spread of illness and lets your child get the care and rest they need to get well!

As a general rule, if your child has a serious cough, especially difficulty breathing, or it has kept them from getting a good night's rest, call the doctor and keep the child home.

A child with a mild cough and no other symptoms can go to school.

Keep your sick child at home if they have any of the following:

- Are too sick to participate fully in normal activities, including physical activity.
- Diarrhea or vomiting - your child should remain home until symptoms have resolved for at least 24 hours.
- Fever- A temperature is considered a fever if it's above 38 ° C (100.4 ° F).
- Influenza-like illness (fever, cough, headache, sore throat).
- Unexplained rash, pain, sore throat.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) is easily spread. Keep your child home until your doctor says they are no longer contagious.

When your child stays home due to illness, call the school/daycare and report ALL symptoms! Schools and daycares track the number of students who are absent. The total number and type of illness is reported to Public Health. This allows Public Health to monitor disease in the community.

Plan ahead

Even with the flu shot and regular hand washing, children still get sick. Have a back-up plan for when your child becomes ill and you have to work!

- Do you have extended family and trustworthy friends nearby that can help?
- What about splitting the day so that one parent stays home in the morning and the other stays home in the afternoon to care for your sick child?
- Are you able to work from home? Does your workplace offer this option?

Trust your instincts. If your child seems lethargic, is not interested in playing and are not their usual self, keep them home and monitor for any signs of illness.