

## NURSE'S NOTES

It's hard sometimes to decide whether to send your children to school when they don't feel well. As parents, you have to consider work schedules, childcare arrangements, transportation and other family matters and you want what is best for your child's health. It is not easy to achieve a balance between the importance of being at school and making a good decision that your child is ill. That's especially hard when you have those great "high-achievers" who don't want to miss a day and lose that perfect attendance record. But balance is what is best for the school and the child!

**Children who have the following symptoms should stay home and not come to school until these symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours *without the help of medication*, or until your doctor sends a note that states the condition is not contagious and it is OK for your child to come back to school.**

**FEVER** - check your child's temperature with a thermometer, and if a fever over 100 degrees is present, don't send him or her to school, even for just a little while in the morning so that they can have "perfect attendance." It doesn't help your child's health to give medicine for fever and send them on to school...that only reduces the fever for a short time, and doesn't take care of the illness that is causing the fever. Coming to school sick (and possibly contagious) not only exposes other children to the illness, but also increases your child's healing time. Once the medicine wears off and the fever returns, your child must be picked up anyway and valuable healing time is lost. **Children must be fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of medicine, before returning to school.**

**VOMITING/DIARRHEA** - until we know that these are not signs of a contagious illness, such as a stomach virus, your child should be kept home. Consider how uncomfortable these two things are, even to an adult who has better control, and how distressed and embarrassed your child will be at school having to go to the restroom often, or feeling sick while sitting at his/her desk. If the vomiting or diarrhea happens more than once that day, or if they are associated with fever, you must keep your child home. Even if these things happen only one time before school starts, and your child feels better immediately afterwards, it is still wise to watch for a few hours to see if it happens again before sending him or her on to class. If your child is spending all his or her time at school feeling sick, then not much learning is taking place!

**SKIN RASHES** - if the rash has any fluid or pus coming from it, the child must remain out of school until the rash has been treated and a note from the doctor states it is ok to return to school, or until the rash is gone, dried, or scabbed over with no new spots appearing. **Anytime a rash is associated with fever, the child may not come to school until that fever is gone for 24 hours without medication.**

**RED EYES, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS ALSO DRAINAGE OR CRUSTING AROUND THE EYE** -this can often mean your child has *conjunctivitis*, also known as **pink-eye**. Not all pink-eye is contagious. Sometimes it is just allergies or other irritations that are causing the red color, but until we know for sure (which means we must have a note from the doctor stating the condition is not contagious, or until the redness and drainage are completely gone), your child must remain out of school.

**PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE) OR SCABIES** - these small insects cause skin conditions that are uncomfortable and itchy, and could become infected. A child must be nit free to return to school. Please contact the school nurse to get information on treatment. Your child's hair must be inspected by the nurse to return to class.

**Kids who are truly sick will heal better and faster when they have proper rest at home, with healthy nutrition and plenty of fluid for hydration. Please call if you have any questions.**

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**School Nurse**

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