



Is your child too sick for school?

Early in the morning, it is often difficult to make a decision about whether or not your child is sick enough to stay home from school. With minor symptoms, you often cannot tell whether your child is going to get better or worse during the course of the day.

The main reasons for keeping your child home are:

- Your child is too sick to be comfortable at school
- Your child might spread a contagious disease to other children

As a rule of thumb, a child should stay home if he/ she has:

- A fever higher than 38°C
- Vomited more than once
- Diarrhea
- A very frequent cough
- Persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.)
- A widespread rash

Most of these problems need to be discussed with your child's pediatrician. We therefore request you to see a doctor if your child is not well and get a medical certificate.

On the other hand, children who don't have fever and only have a mild cough, runny nose or other cold symptoms can be sent to school without any harm to themselves or others. The following guidelines may help in your decision process:

A **runny nose** is the way many children respond to pollen, dust or a cold virus. Minor cold or allergy symptoms should not be a reason to miss school. Many healthy children have as many as six colds per year, especially in the early school years.

Coughing, especially if it is persistent during the day, can indicate a worsening of cold or allergy symptoms. It may be a sign of a secondary infection (e.g., sinusitis, pneumonia), which may require medical treatment. It may also indicate mild asthma. If your child's cough is worse than you might expect with a common cold, you need to consult your child's doctor. You should do so

immediately if the child is not acting normal, has a fever or has any difficulty breathing.

Diarrhea and vomiting make children very uncomfortable. A single episode of vomiting, without any other symptoms, may not be reason enough for the child to miss school, but be sure the school can reach you if symptoms occur again during the day. A single episode of watery diarrhea probably warrants not going to school. It could be very embarrassing and uncomfortable for your child to have another episode while in school. If diarrhea or vomiting are frequent or are accompanied by fever, rash or general weakness, consult your child's doctor and keep the child out of school until the illness passes.

Fever (generally considered to be higher than 38°C) is an important symptom – especially when it occurs along with a sore throat, nausea or a rash. Your child could have a contagious illness, which could be passed to classmates and teachers. While you can treat the fever, and usually make the child feel better temporarily, the cause of the fever (and the risk of passing it to others) is still there. Children with fever should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours.

Strep throat and scarlet fever are two highly contagious conditions caused by the same bacterial infection. They usually arrive with sudden complaint of sore throat and fever and often stomachache and headache. With scarlet fever, a rash usually appears within 12 to 48 hours. A child with these symptoms should see the doctor for diagnosis and treatment and should remain out of school until he/she is without fever and has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.



Pinkeye, or conjunctivitis, can be caused by a virus, bacteria or allergy. The first two are very contagious. The eye will be reddened, and a cloudy or yellow discharge is usually present. The eye may be sensitive to light. Consult with your child's doctor to see if antibiotic eye drops are needed. Again, your child should stay home until symptoms subside and he/she has been on antibiotic eye drops at least 24 hours or until the doctor recommends your child return to school.

Middle ear infections can cause great discomfort and often fever, but are not contagious to others. Your child should see the doctor for diagnosis and treatment and should stay at home if he/she has fever or pain.

Severe cold/ influenza is a contagious virus that usually occurs in the winter months. Symptoms include body aches, high fever, chills, congestion, sore throat and, in some children, vomiting. Your child should stay home until these symptoms improve, usually five to seven days. Consult your child's doctor for treatment suggestions to make your child more comfortable.

Impetigo is a staph or strep infection that creates a red, oozing blister-like area that can appear anywhere on the body or face. A honey-coloured crust may appear on the area. It can be passed to others by direct contact. Consult your child's doctor for treatment and length of time your child should remain out of school, especially if the area cannot be covered.

Chickenpox is a highly contagious viral illness. It causes fever and an itchy rash, which spreads quickly all over the body, changing

from red bumps to blister-like lesions, than scabs. Your child needs to stay home until all bumps are scabbed and no new bumps have appeared for two days. Your child is contagious at least two days before the rash starts, so you need to let the school and playmates know, and consult your child's doctor for treatment of symptoms. A vaccine is available for children who have not yet had chickenpox and is required for kindergarten. The vaccine will also be required for all new sixth graders who have not yet had chickenpox.

Scabies and lice brought into a school can quickly produce an epidemic of itching and scratching. Scabies are tiny insects that burrow into the skin and cause severe itching. Lice are tiny wingless insects, like ticks, that thrive on the warm scalps of children and cause itching. Both should be treated immediately, with advice from your child's doctor. Children need to stay home from school until head lice are dead and until nits or eggs are removed with a special fine comb. Head checks should continue for 10 to 14 days. Caution your child against sharing combs, brushes, hats or other clothing. In the case of scabies, children should stay home for 24 hours after treatment.

Worm infections require immediate attention and are to be treated as early as possible. The most common sign for worm's infection in children is itchy bottom that is generally noticed at the time of night or early morning. This is because this is the time, when worms travel downwards and may come out of the anus. The child continuously itches the anal region and easily caught doing it. Please consult your child's doctor immediately.



All of these illnesses can be spread easily, both in school and in the family. To prevent the spread of infections at school, please follow the instructions on the next page:

	Attending class?		Medical innocuousness certificate	Amount of days to cure:	Symptom free for minimum:
	Yes	No			
Running nose	✓				
Coughing	✓				
Bacterial/ viral cold		✓	Needed	5-7 days	24 hours
Diarrhea		✓			
Vomiting		✓			
Fever		✓			24 hours
Strep throat		✓		As long as fever remains	24 hours on antibiotics
Scarlet fever		✓	Needed	As long as fever remains	24 hours on antibiotics
Pinkeye		✓	Needed	Until symptoms subside	24 hours
Mid. ear infection		✓	Needed		24 hours
Severe cold/ influenza		✓	Needed	5-7 days	24 hours
Impetigo		✓	Needed		24 hours
Chickenpox		✓	Needed		48 hours
Scabies		✓	Needed		24 hours
Lice		✓	Needed		24 hours
Worm infection		✓	Needed		

In general:

- ✓ Whenever there is a **doubt** in your mind about sending your child to school, consult your child's doctor before doing so.
- ✓ Make sure that you are **reachable** during the day in case of any emergency and that there is a **back-up plan** in case you have to pick up your child from school.
- ✓ If you yourself or any member of your close family is not well or suffering from a contagious illness we request you to **not enter the school campus** and organise the dropping and pick up of your child accordingly.
- ✓ Please bring a **medical certificate** whenever your child is not able to attend class at school from your child's doctor and please inform the Front Office and the teacher if possible as soon as you decide to keep your child at home. **Phone GIS: 044-2451 2504**

Thank you for cooperating