

When to Miss School

School starts in an hour, and your child says she doesn't feel well. Should you send her to school or keep her home? "Ask yourself, 'If my child were healthy, would I want her near someone with these symptoms?'" advises Robert Hoekelman, M.D., contributing editor of *The Merck Manual of Medical Information- Home Edition*, who offers these guidelines to help you decide what to do. Of course, if symptoms last longer than 24 hours or worsen, call your pediatrician.

Symptom	Keep your child home if:
FEVER	She has a morning temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, or her temperature is below 100 but she is achy, pale or tired.
STOMACHACHE	She has had two or more episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, or has had one in the past 24 hours and feels tired or ill.
SNEEZING OR RUNNY NOSE	She is sneezing a lot, and her nose won't stop running.
SORE THROAT	She has tender, swollen glands and a fever of 100 or higher.
COUGH	She coughs frequently, coughs up phlegm, or her cough sounds like a bark or is accompanied by a sore throat or wheezing.
EARACHE	Her pain is constant or severe—a sign of otitis media.
RASH	The rash blisters, develops pus, or is uncomfortable, which would signal chicken pox or impetigo.

From our experience we have learned that sick children seldom, if ever, gain anything by attending school. They are much better off at home where they are most likely to get the necessary care for recovery and early return to school. Keeping ill children at home also protects other children, their family, and the school staff from infection.

A child must be kept home at least 24 hours after a fever and 24 hours after starting antibiotics, **REMINDER: if your child needs to take medication at school, you need to send an authorization form signed by you and the health care provider with the medication. (The prescription information on the bottle of medicine is the equivalent of the health care provider's signature.)**

Prompt care and isolation of a sick child will minimize the total time school days lost by your child and/or other children. Regular attendance at school is necessary for your child to receive full benefit from school.

If your child is kept at home, please notify the school that your child will be absent and the reason for the absence.

Please call your school nurse if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Marlene White, MSN, APRN, BC
Yolanda Zermeño, LVN
School Nurse

886-6552
886-6512
Phone Number