

## SCHOOL AND ILLNESS: SHOULD YOUR CHILD STAY HOME?

Parents often have trouble knowing whether their child is too ill to go to school. The following guidelines will help you decide.

### CHILD IS TOO ILL

Your child is too ill to go to school if he or she has any of these signs:

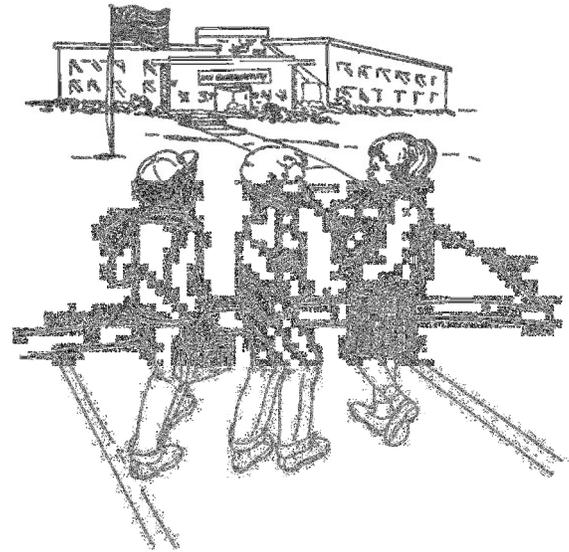
- Seems **very** tired and needs bed rest (this is common with flu symptoms).
- Has vomiting or diarrhea.
- Becomes short of breath or has an increase in wheezing during normal activity.
- Has a cough that disrupts his normal activity.
- Has an underarm temperature above 100°F
- Has pain from earache, headache, sore throat, or recent injury.
- Has yellow or green drainage from eye(s).
- Breaks out in a rash.

### FEVER

Your child should not go to school if his underarm temperature is above 100°F. He may return to school 24 hours after his underarm temperature is below 100°F and he is feeling better.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

- Your child should stay home from school if he has a contagious disease to keep from spreading it to others. A contagious disease is one that can be spread by close contact with a person or object. Examples are: chickenpox, the flu with vomiting or diarrhea, colds, "runny nose," strep throat, lice and scabies, impetigo and "pinkeye." A disease is most often contagious **24 hours before the child shows signs of illness**. It is very hard to prevent the spread of some germs, especially in a school classroom. Good hand washing will help prevent the spread of germs.
- If your child has chickenpox or strep throat, ask your doctor when he may return to school. Generally, children who have active chickenpox should not return to school until all the lesions are dried and crusted. Children with strep throat should be on antibiotics for 24 hours and have no fever before returning to school.
- When your child has been free of fever for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol®), is feeling better, and has no other symptoms, he may return to school.
- If an antibiotic medicine is prescribed for your child, be sure he has taken the medicine for at least 24 hours before returning to school. **Remember** - The antibiotic medicine should be taken as prescribed until it is **all** gone.



**Picture 1** Your child may return to school 24 hours after a fever is gone.

**REMEMBER**

- School is a child's work. It is important for normal development. If your child is absent often, it may be harder to keep up with the class. It is important that your child does not miss more than a few days of school a year due to illness.
- Ask your doctor when you are not sure about keeping your child home.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse.