



Health Guidance for Going to School

Showing up to school every day is critical for children's well-being, engagement, and learning.

Make sure to send children to school if they:

- Are generally healthy and well.
- Can participate in usual day-to-day activities.

Children can even go to school if they:

- Have a cold, which may include a runny or stuffy nose and cough.
- Have eye redness without drainage, fever, eye pain, eyelid redness or vision changes.
- Have a mild stomachache.
- Have a rash that is consistent with a previously diagnosed skin condition, e.g., eczema or psoriasis.
- Have head lice. Though they are annoying and should be treated, lice are not a reason to exclude a child from school.
- Haven't had a fever in 24 hours and they have not taken fever-reducing medicine during that time.

Please see the back of this handout for details on when children should stay home. Note that in many situations, a health-care provider's note is not needed to return to school.

Children may sometimes avoid school due to feelings of anxiety (symptoms may include decreased appetite, feeling tired, stomachache, headache, etc.). If you are worried that your child may be suffering from feelings of anxiety, talk with your teacher, the school nurse, social worker or other school staff to discuss the challenge and identify what can help your child stay in school. If you feel your student is experiencing anxiety, then a visit to your healthcare provider may prove helpful to your student.

If your child has a compromised immune system or is at high risk for complications from common illnesses, please talk to your school (school nurse if available) about developing a plan with you and your child's health-care provider to keep your child healthy and safe while attending school.

Please note: This document is intended to supplement your local health department/school district guidance.

Reasons to keep me home from school and what needs to happen before I can return

What is my symptom?	When should I stay home?	When can I return to school?
Fever	I have had a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in the last 24 hours.	If I have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and I am feeling better.
Vomiting or diarrhea	If I have vomited 1 or more times in the last 24 hours. If I have had 3 loose or watery stools in a day or if I may not make it to the toilet in time.	If I did not vomit in the last 24 hours and I am able to drink liquids and eat food. If I have not had diarrhea in the last 24 hours.
New cough or trouble breathing	If I have a new or persistent cough that interferes with my ability to participate in school activities, difficulty breathing or trouble catching my breath.	Once I am feeling better and my symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours. If my symptoms were due to asthma, please make sure that I have permission to use a rescue inhaler at school.
Rash	If the rash is new and undiagnosed by a health-care provider, is increasing in size, is draining and cannot be completely covered, or if I develop a fever.	If my rash has healed or I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider and any draining rashes are completely covered.
Eye redness and drainage	If I have new and unexplained eye redness without drainage, fever, eye pain, eyelid redness or vision changes.	Once my eye symptoms have gone away or I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider.

If you don't know whether to send your child to school or have specific concerns regarding your child's health, contact your child's health-care provider, a local healthcare provider, or the school nurse.