

BRIDGEWATER-RAYNHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HEALTH SERVICES

Information To Help You Know When To Keep Your Child Home From School

The decision to keep a sick child home from school can be difficult and stressful. It may involve schedule changes with some parents having to miss work, and children having to miss important classroom instruction. However, when a child is truly ill, they need to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and to prevent the spread of illness to others.

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests starting with these three quick questions:

1. Does your child have a fever?
2. Is your child well enough to engage in the educational process? If an ill child seems too run down to endure the day or get much out of school, keep them home.
3. Do you think your child has a contagious illness, such as the flu or conjunctivitis?

The following circumstances necessitate keeping a child home from school:

Fever of 100° or more – Child should be kept home 24 hours **after** fever is no longer present **without** the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). Encourage fluids and rest.

Vomiting or Diarrhea – Child should be kept home 24 hours **after last episode**. Encourage fluids and rest.

Cough – When coughing interferes with sleep or ability to participate in school activities, child should be kept home. If associated with fever or a change in breathing, contact pediatrician.

Sore Throat – If associated with fever or difficulty swallowing, child should be kept home for 24 hours. If associated with a diagnosis of **strep throat**, child should be kept home 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment. Encourage fluids.

Rash – If associated with fever or is itchy, scaly, open, draining or spreading, child should be kept home and evaluated by their pediatrician before being sent to school.

Earaches – If pain is severe, associated with fever or more than 24 hours in duration, child should be kept home and evaluated by pediatrician.

Conjunctivitis – Child should be kept home and evaluated by pediatrician if eye is draining, itchy or excessively inflamed. Child should not be sent back to until after the start of antibiotic eye medication.

Narcotic Medication – A child on narcotic pain medication should be kept home until 24 hours after the last dose due to associated impairments and side effects.

Diagnosed Infection – Child should be kept home 24 hours after first dose of antibiotics and if associated with the skin, the site should remain covered at school.