

# When Your Child is Sick.....

Dear Parents,

The beginning of cooler weather has also seen the beginning of cold and flu season. As parents, many of us find ourselves at home with children who come down with a cold, runny nose, persistent cough, but are still eager to return to school. When can they return to school? The answer is...*that depends* on the type of illness your child has had. When making this decision here are factors to consider: the general health of your child; the risk of spreading infection; the severity of the illness and how similar illnesses have affected your child in the past. Often a child who is recovering from illness is more susceptible to picking up another germ at school and relapsing. A child who has been up at night and is tired is also not able to make it through an active day at school.


Children must be fever free for at least 36 hours before returning to school. When your child has loose bowel movements or is throwing up, please wait at least 36 hours without an additional episode before your child returns to school.

When dealing with the common cold, common sense is the rule. When a child's temperature and activity level are normal, she or he can probably return to school. Keep in mind that colds are highly contagious. So if the risk of spreading infection is great, please be kind to the staff and your child's classmates. When in doubt, keep your child out of class until he or she is well rested and recovered and ready to enjoy a full and active day.

For bacterial infections like strep throat, children must be on medication for 24 hours and fever-free before returning to school. If your child has had a bacterial pneumonia, ask your child's pediatrician for guidance. Some infections have an incubation period of up to 2-3 weeks.

Young children develop colds frequently and keeping all children with cold symptoms away from school is neither practical nor possible, but if your child's runny nose is persistent and excessive, please keep your child at home. Good judgment, good hygiene and good hand washing habits may help prevent the spread of illness to others.

With best wishes for a cold and flu-free fall and winter,

  
Mindy Citera