

# WHEN IS YOUR CHILD TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL?

To school or not to school? That is the question facing parents as their usually exuberant, hungry child sits listlessly at the breakfast table ignoring his/her cereal.

The following guidelines were developed to assist parents in their struggle with this dilemma.

**FEVER:** Temperature should be normal (98.6 orally or 99.6 rectally) For 24 hours before sending a child to school. For example, if your child has a fever in the evening, they should not come to school the next morning, even if his/her temperature is normal. Temperatures are lower in the morning, and fever may occur again in the afternoon.

**VOMITING:** If your child VOMITS during the night DO NOT send them to school the next day. They really need rest and probably a liquid or soft diet.

**DIARRHEA:** Loose stools have many causes; children should not come to school until bowel movements have normal consistency. If diarrhea persists or is accompanied by other symptoms, consult your physician.

**COLDS:** Colds and runny noses are rampant in the winter months. As long as there is no fever or discomfort, the child may go to school. Instruct your child on proper use of tissues for coughing, sneezing and nose blowing. Also, children should be instructed on good hand washing techniques, as research shows that more colds are spread via contaminated hands and articles than by infected droplets in the air. **If cold symptoms are severe - thick, greenish nasal discharge or frequent coughing that interferes with your youngster's or others' learning - keep your child at home.** Please be sensitive to the fact that you need to think of the others, both students and staff, who may be infected by your child as well as the child himself.

**EARACHE:** Hearing is the most important sense for learning, so never ignore an earache. Keep your child at home and contact your physician. In case of ear discharge, even without pain, notify your physician, as this generally means a ruptured eardrum.

Conditions such as **lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, pinworms, and pink eye** must be properly treated before the child returns to school. In the case of lice, nits (eggs) must be removed from the hair.

In case of **strep throat** or other conditions, your child may return to school while still on antibiotics, however no

medication may be dispensed in school except by a parent. Adjust the schedule so that the child takes the medication before and after school hours.

According to OSHA regulations, no child will be allowed to wear any clothing which has bodily fluids (even dried) on it. He/she must either get a clean change of clothing or go home. You may want to make sure that your sitter has an extra change of clothes if you can't be reached during the school day. Also, **no child with an open wound will be allowed to remain in school.** Please cover all wounds or sores with Band-Aids. A child with open sores may be sent home.