

When should a child stay home from school?

For any of the following symptoms your child should remain at home:

1. **Fever of 100 or higher** - Keep your child home from school. While at home encourage plenty of fluids. Your child should be fever-free for 24 hours (without medication) before returning to school.
2. **Mild Cough/Runny Nose** - If there's no fever and your child feels fairly good, school is fine.
3. **Bad Cough/Cold Symptoms** - Children with bad coughs need to stay home and possibly see a doctor. It could be a severe cold or possibly bronchitis, flu or pneumonia. But when the cough improves, and your child is feeling better, then it's back to school. Don't wait for the cough to disappear entirely as that could take a week or longer.
4. **Diarrhea or Vomiting** - Keep your child at home until the illness is over and for 24 hours after the last episode (without medicine). Encourage fluids.
5. **Sore Throat** - A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be **strep throat** even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat in children are headache and stomach upset. Keep your child home from school, and contact a doctor. Your child needs a special test to determine if it is strep throat. He or she can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.
6. **Earache** - Your child needs to be seen by a doctor.
7. **Impetigo or other skin rash** - Children with a skin rash should see a doctor as this could be one of several infectious diseases. One possibility is Impetigo, a bacterial skin infection that is very contagious and requires antibiotic treatment. Also, Fifth Disease is a contagious viral illness spread by coughs and sneezes; it's no longer contagious by the time rash appears. A note from the doctor indicating if the condition is non-contagious and the child is alright to be at school is very important.
8. **Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)** - A child with a draining, itching eye that is red must be seen by the doctor and treated for 24 hours with antibiotic eye medicine before returning to school.

