

# WELLNESS CORNER

## Should my child stay home from school?



Should my child stay home from school? Parents often struggle with this question. To help you make this decision, below are guidelines for when a sick child should stay home and when it is alright to send the child to school. Still not sure if they should go to school? The school nurse is always a good resource and would be glad to assist you in making that decision. Remember, keeping an ill student home helps to protect the entire school community.

SYMPTOMS	SHOULD STUDENT STAY HOME?
Cold or Allergies	Your child does not need to stay home unless he/she has severe congestion that keeps him/her from participating in normal school activities.
Coughing	Your child does not need to stay home unless he/she has uncontrolled coughing that will disrupt normal activity.
Diarrhea	Your child will need to stay home from school if he/she has repeated loose or watery stools. He/she should wait at least 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhea to return to school.
Eyes	Your child should stay home from school and be evaluated by PCP if his/her

	eyes are red, painful, have yellow or green drainage, and/or are sensitive to light. If your child is diagnosed with bacterial conjunctivitis, he/she must be on antibiotics ointment or drops for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
Fever	If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or above, he/she must stay home from school. Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Acetaminophen (sold as Tylenol, other brand names) or Ibuprofen (sold as Advil, Motrin, other brands) before returning to school.
“Flu-like” Symptoms	Your child should stay home for at least 24 hours for “flu like” symptoms. Flu symptoms often include: fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness, body aches, vomiting and/or diarrhea
Rash	A student should stay home and be evaluated by PCP for a rash with a fever, a rash that is draining, or a rash that has spread quickly.
Sore Throat	Your child may go to school unless the sore throat is severe and/or accompanied by a fever. A sore throat with a fever should be evaluated by PCP. If your child is diagnosed with strep throat, he/she should be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
Vomiting	Child must stay home from school for at least 24 hours after vomiting has resolved. Please do not send a child to school that has been vomiting during the night.



**Always remember... The best way to prevent the spread of illness is through good hand washing.**

**\*Flu vaccines are now being given in our area. Flu vaccines are a great way of preventing the flu. Call your Pediatrician if you would like your child to receive a flu vaccine.**

*This month’s Wellness Corner Article was written by Sarah F. Smith RN. Sarah is the nurse at South Hadley High School and is the secretary for the Health and Wellness Advisory Committee.*