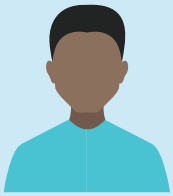
When is your child too sick for school?

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

School attendance is a powerful predictor of school success and on-time graduation.
Department of Education says children who miss less than 9 days in a school year generally perform better in school. Use these tips to tell when your child is too sick for school.

Send your child to school if they...



Don't feel great but are able to participate in normal activities.

Keep your child home if they...

Feel sick and have a fever of 100.4°F or higher, test positive for flu or COVID-19, or can't participate in normal activities.

Threw up in the past 24 hours.

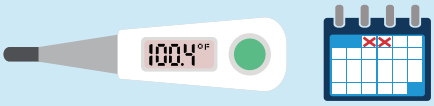
Had diarrhea and increased stool frequency in the past 24 hours.

Have a rash of unknown origin. They can return to school when a healthcare provider says it's okay.

Have an oozing sore or wound you can't cover or contain.

This is general guidance. Schools, healthcare providers, a student's approved care plan, or the Health Department may advise differently based on individual circumstances.

Call a healthcare provider if they...



Have a fever of 100.4°F or higher for more than 2 days.

Throw up or have diarrhea for more than 2 days.

Have the sniffles for more than a week and aren't getting better.

Have asthma symptoms after using asthma medicine. If they have trouble breathing after using an inhaler, call 911.