

Types of Communicable Diseases

Infected Disease	Signs/Symptoms	Contagious Period	Should My Child Go to School	How It Spreads
Ringworm	Appears as flat, spreading ring-shaped lesions. The edge of the lesion may be dry and scaly or moist and crusty. As the lesion spreads outward, the center often becomes clear. Ringworm on the scalp may be hard to detect.	Once ringworm is visible. When the rash starts shrinking and treatment has begun, it could become less contagious	No. Keep your child home until treatment has started. Rash should be covered with clothing or a band-aid while in school.	- By touching the infected skin of a person or pet - By touching contaminated objects: hats, brushes, clothing, shower stalls, swimming pool decks, locker room benches or floors
Scabies	Rash with intense itching that may be more severe at night. Look for a rash of pink bumps or tiny blisters commonly seen between fingers, around wrists, elbows and armpits.	Before the rash starts and until 24 hours after treatment begins	No. Keep your child home until 24 hours after treatment begins.	- By having direct contact with the skin of a person with scabies - By sharing bedding, towels or clothing used by a person with scabies
Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever	May have sudden onset of fever, sore throat, swollen glands, headache, nausea, stomachache or vomiting. Scarlet Fever: A very fine raised rash is present on the neck, chest, elbow, groin, thighs and armpits.	Until 12 hours after antibiotic treatment begins	No. Keep your child home until 12 hours after treatment begins, child is fever free for 24 hours without medication and is well enough to participate in normal activities.	- By coughing or sneezing - By touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Begins with runny nose, sneezing, mild cough and low-grade fever. After 1-2 weeks, a persistent cough develops which may occur in explosive bursts, especially at night.	From the time of the first cold-like symptoms until 21 days after coughing begins or after taking five days of antibiotics	No. Keep your child home until five days after antibiotic treatment begins. *Notify health office of diagnosis.	- By coughing or sneezing - By touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Bacterial: The white part of the eye is pink or red with pus or sticky drainage. The eyes are painful or itchy. Viral: The white part of the eye is pink with clear, watery discharge. The eyes may or may not be painful or itchy.	While symptoms are present	Yes, if your child is fever free for 24 hours without medication and is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.	- By touching secretions from the eyes, nose or mouth - By touching hands, objects or surfaces contaminated with secretions
Chickenpox (Varicella)	Fever and skin rash that comes in clusters. Rash begins on the chest, back, under arms, neck and face, changing to blisters and then scabs.	From 1-2 days before the rash begins until all blisters have become scabs	No. Keep your child home from school until blisters have dried into scabs and there have been no new lesions for 24 hours, usually about six days after rash first appears. *Notify the school health office of diagnosis.	- By touching the blister fluid or secretions from the nose or mouth of a person with chickenpox - By coughing or sneezing
Cold Sores/Fever Blisters (Herpes Simplex)	Sores appear on the lips, face and sometimes in the mouth. Sores usually crust and heal within a few days.	First infection: up to two weeks, or longer Recurring infection: 3-5 days	Yes. Your child does not need to stay home from school.	- By having direct contact with saliva, commonly by kissing - By touching the fluid from the blisters or sores
Common Cold (Viral Respiratory Infections)	Runny nose, sneezing, chills, tiredness, fever, muscle aches, sore throat and cough that may last 2-7 days.	From the day before symptoms appear to 5-7 days later	Yes, unless fever is present. Must be fever free for 24 hours without medication and is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.	- By coughing and sneezing - By touching hands, objects or surfaces contaminated with secretions
COVID-19 (Coronavirus)	Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, body aches, headaches, vomiting, diarrhea or a new loss of taste or smell.	With symptoms: from two days before to ten days after symptoms began No symptoms: from two days before to ten days after lab test was taken	No. Keep your child home until: - Until 24 hours after fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine. - Symptoms are improving.	- By close contact with someone who is infected By breathing, coughing and sneezing - By touching contaminated objects or surfaces Cases with no symptoms can still spread disease to others
Fifth Disease	Rarely any symptoms other than a rash that begins on the cheeks and later can be seen on the arms and/ or chest.	Until rash appears	Yes, if your child is fever free for 24 hours without medication.	- By coughing or sneezing - By touching hands, objects or surfaces contaminated with secretions
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	Sores occur in the mouth and may last 7-10 days. In most cases, sores are on the palms of the hands, fingers and soles of the feet. A low-grade fever may be present for 1-2 days.	During the first week of illness	No. Keep your child home until they are fever free for 24 hours (without medication) and blisters have dried into scabs.	- By coughing and sneezing - By touching hands, objects or surfaces contaminated with stool - By touching fluid from the blisters
Head Lice	Itching of the scalp. Look for live lice in the hair. Nits (eggs) are often found behind the back of the neck.	Until treated with a louse killing product. Recommended treatment includes using store-bought or prescription lice killing product	Yes. It is strongly recommended that your child be treated for head lice. Avoid head-to-head contact with other children.	- By head-to-head contact - By sharing personal items that have had contact with the head (combs, brushes, hats, etc.)
Impetigo	Blister-like sores that form an oozing, sticky, yellow crust. Itching is often present	Until sores are healed or have been treated for at least 24 hours	No. Keep your child home from school until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.	- By touching the fluid from the sores - By touching contaminated objects
Influenza-like Illness	Sudden onset of fever, headache, muscle pain, body aches, cough and/or sore throat.	During the first 24 hours before and up to seven days after the illness begins	No. Keep your child home until they are fever free for 24 hours (without medication) and is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.	- By coughing or sneezing - By touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces
Mono (Infectious Mononucleosis)	Fever, sore throat, tiredness and swollen glands. A rash may be present.	For several weeks or longer	Yes, if your child is fever free for 24 hours (without medication) and is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.	By kissing or sharing items contaminated with saliva

When to Keep a Sick Child Home

Many parents/guardians are frequently concerned about when their child should stay home from school when they are sick. The following information is intended to help with this decision.



Do NOT Send Your Child to School If:

- If your child has a fever of 100.4°F or more, keep them home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without using fever-reducing medication.
- If your child has vomited one or more times, keep them home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If your child has diarrhea and needs to use the bathroom frequently.
- If your child has a rash whose cause is unknown, check with a health care provider before sending them to school.
- If your child has an illness that prevents them from participating in routine activities.

Notifying School of Absence

Notify your child's school daily to report absences. If you have any questions, please call the school's health office or your family health care provider.



Call school health office or log into Infinite Campus to report your child's absence.



Provide your child's name.



Provide your child's grade.



Provide the reason for your child's absence.



Provide confirmed diagnosis of communicable disease (if applicable).

For more information about SoWashCo Schools Health Services or to find the contact information for your child's school's health office, please visit sowashco.org/health

Communicable Diseases Guidelines



SoWashCo SCHOOLS