

## Policy for Dealing with Communicable Disease in the School/Daycare Setting

Controlling communicable diseases in daycare and school settings is very important. Providing a safe, comfortable, and healthy environment supports the learning process, encourages social development, and helps children develop healthy attitudes toward group settings.

Children who are ill or feel sick can create difficulties in group settings. A sick child often requires more attention from the teacher or caregiver and cannot fully take part in group or learning activities. Even more concerning, a child with a communicable disease may spread the illness to others. This is especially true for medically fragile children. Because of this, it is essential that educators, parents, and daycare providers work to control the spread of communicable diseases with safe, effective, and practical efforts.

The following are conditions of special concern for which children should be kept home and, when needed, seen and treated by a licensed clinician before returning to school or daycare:

### 1. **Colds/Flu/COVID**

Children with coughing, sneezing, chills, general body discomfort, fatigue, fever, and discharge from the nose and/or eyes should be kept home until the fever has been gone for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medicine), symptoms are improving, and any yellow or green drainage has cleared. Isolation for confirmed COVID is no longer recommended.

### 2. **Persistent cough**

A cough lasting longer than 3-4 days, especially if it causes vomiting, passing out, or produces colored mucus.

### 3. **Diarrheal diseases**

An increase in bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern, with watery or loose stools, which may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, headache, and/or fever, should be resolved for at least 24 hours before returning to school. If any stool softener (such as an enema or laxative) is given, please keep the student home for at least 24 hours. Food handlers may return but should be symptom-free for 72 hours before handling food.

**4. Pinkeye or conjunctivitis**

Symptoms of conjunctivitis include redness, discharge from the eye, matted eyelashes, and burning or itching eyes, and should be evaluated by a healthcare provider. The individual must have cleared symptoms or be treated with a topical antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

**5. Open wounds or sores**

Wounds that are open or draining should be kept covered with a dressing.

**6. Vomiting nausea**

Must be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. Food handlers may return but should be symptom-free for 72 hours before handling food.

**7. Strep throat or other bacterial infection**

Should be treated with an antibiotic for at least 24 hours and be fever-free for at least 24 hours.

**8. Temperature over 100.4**


Must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers before returning to school.

**9. Skin rash**

Any rash that may be caused by an infection should be checked by a healthcare professional or fully resolved before returning to school.

It would be greatly appreciated if children with these problems could bring a note from their clinician when they return to school.

Thank you for helping us care for and teach your children by providing for their medical needs. Please contact your school nurse with any questions.

  
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