**WHEN TO KEEP SICK CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL**

**Deciding when to keep a sick child at home from school is not always easy. It’s important for children to attend school and for some parents staying home means missing work. But when a child is truly sick, they need to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and to prevent spreading illness to others.**

**Please keep the school office up to date with current phone numbers so you or an alternate contact can be reached if your child becomes ill or injured at school.**

**The following information may help you decide when to keep your child at home. This information does not take the place of consulting a medical provider.**

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| **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMON COLDS and THE FLU** | |
| **COMMON COLD**  The common cold is a contagious upper respiratory infection caused by cold viruses. It is the most frequent childhood illness. Symptoms can last 7 to 14 days. A child with no fever, mild symptoms and otherwise feeling well may be fine at school.  **WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:**  A child with heavy cold symptoms such as deep or uncontrollable coughing or significant lack of energy belongs at home even without a fever. They should not come to school if they have fever! | **FLU (INFLUENZA)**  The flu is a **highly contagious** respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses and can cause mild to severe illness. Children are one of the biggest sources for spreading the flu  **WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:**  **A child with flu‐like illness (fever and cough) must stay home from school for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever, WITHOUT the use of fever‐reducing medicine.** A fever is defined as a temperature of 100°F or higher. If symptoms occur while at school, the student must be picked up as soon as possible to go home. |
| **Symptoms Usually come on gradually** | **Symptoms Usually come on quickly** |
| **Fever Rare in adults and older children, but can be as high as 102°F in infants and small children** | **Fever Typically as high as 102°F, but can rise to 104°F and usually lasts 3 to 4 days** |
| **Cough Mild, hacking cough** | **Cough Often, can be severe** |
| **Headache Rare** | **Headache Sudden onset, can be severe** |
| **Muscle aches Mild** | **Muscle aches Usual, can be severe** |
| **Tiredness/weakness Mild** | **Tiredness/weakness Can last 2 or more weeks** |
| **Extreme exhaustion Never** | **Extreme exhaustion Sudden onset, can be severe** |
| **Vomiting/diarrhea Never** | **Vomiting/diarrhea Sometimes** |
| **Runny Nose Often** | **Runny Nose Sometimes** |
| **Sneezing Often** | **Sneezing Sometimes** |
| **Sore throat Often** | **Sore throat Sometimes** |