

Many students and parents are concerned about when students should stay home or attend school. The following information is intended to help with this decision.

- If the student has had a fever of 100 degrees or more, the student should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without medication.
- If the student has vomited or had diarrhea, he/she should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If the student has any rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown, check with your health care provider before sending him/her to school.
- If the student has open/draining skin sores, or inflamed/draining eyes or ears the student should stay home until it's either resolved or seen by your health care provider.

**When your child is ill, please call the school daily to report the illness. If we call because your child has become ill, please make arrangements for your child to be picked up within an hour.**

## **Communicable Diseases**

These are a few of the more common contagious illnesses that we see in school-age children:

### ***Chicken Pox (varicella) – Please Notify the Health Office if You Suspect Your Child Has Chicken Pox or Shingles***

Symptoms: Slight fever, general feeling of illness, rash begins as red bumps changing within hours to water blister appearance on chest, arms, neck, face. Blisters scab over in 3-4 days

Source of Infection: Virus is spread directly and airborne through respiratory secretions and discharge from blisters. Highly communicable and contagious 2 days before fever until 5 days after last crop of blisters.

Incubation: 10-21 days

Recommendations: Exclude from school until all blisters are dry and crusted, usually 6 days after onset of rash. Do not use salicylates (aspirin) because of the risk of Reye's syndrome. A vaccine is available that can prevent or at least lessen the symptoms of the illness. Call your Healthcare Provider if someone in your home:

- develops a rash with a fever, your doctor will decide if treatment is needed. **Do not** go to a healthcare facility without calling first, you will be separated from others to prevent the spread of illness.
- has been exposed to chickenpox and they have not had chickenpox disease or a chickenpox (varicella) vaccine in the past.
- has a weakened immune system caused by illness or medication. For example people with HIV/AIDS or cancer, patients who have had transplants, people on chemotherapy, immunosuppressive medications or long term steroids
- is pregnant

### **Cold Sores/Herpes Simplex**

Symptoms: Vesicles (fever blisters) usually on lips, but may occur anywhere on skin or in mucous membranes. May be confused with impetigo.

Source of Infection: Virus is spread directly from infected persons, potentially for months.

Incubation: 2-14 days

Recommendations: No exclusion for mild sores in students who are in control of their oral secretions. Exception would be during the primary (first) infection - students may be asked to cover lesions, stay at home and avoid skin contact sports.

### **Conjunctivitis (pink eye)**

Symptoms: Redness of eyeball or conjunctivae (inner surface of eyelid), itching or burning of eye, eye feels scratchy or "sandy", discharge can be watery or purulent and sticky

Source of Infection: May be caused by viruses, bacteria, allergies, or irritants. Spread through hand-eye contact with secretions.

Incubation: 1-12 days

Recommendations: Communicability depends on source. May be excluded from school if drainage is purulent, student cannot refrain from rubbing eye, and until 24 hours after antibiotic has been started or symptoms have improved.

### **Diarrhea**

Symptoms: Loose, watery bowel movements, usually higher frequency than normal

Source of Infection: Viruses, bacteria, food contamination, food intolerance, water contamination, medication side effect, etc. Usually fecal-hand-oral route of transmission.

Incubation: Varies

Recommendations: Diligent hand washing. Exclusion from school for 24 hours after last episode (without use of medication), if symptoms interrupt school day or are uncontrolled.

### **Fifth Disease**

Symptoms: Rash, sometimes a fever, achiness, headache. Rash causes bright red cheeks, then lacy pink rash on trunk and extremities that can reoccur for 1-3 weeks with sunlight and heat. In adults, rash may not be present but joint pain may persist for months.

Source of Infection: Human parvovirus B19 transmitted by respiratory secretions. Most infectious before rash appears.

Incubation: 4-21 days

Recommendations: No exclusion from school unless fever present or student feels ill. If a child has a weakened immune system, sickle cell anemia or other blood disorders and has been

exposed, please contact your health care provider. Pregnant women that have been exposed to fifth disease should notify their health care provider also.

### **Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease**

Symptoms: Sores in mouth and on tonsils with discomfort, water blisters on palms, soles of feet. Rarely, body aches and mild fever.

Source of Infection: Viral by direct contact with respiratory secretions or fecal-hand-oral route.

Incubation: 3-6 days

Recommendations: No exclusion from school unless fever present or student feels ill.

### **Impetigo**

Symptoms: Skin rash with blisters/sores that rapidly cover with honey-colored crusts and cause itching. May be confused with cold sores. Usually first seen near mouth or nose.

Source of Infection: Bacteria, (staphylococcus or streptococcus most common) spread by direct contact with infected person or articles of clothing, etc., soiled by discharge from rash or respiratory secretions.

Incubation: 1-10 days

Recommendations: Exclude from school until treated with antibiotic for 24 hours or lesions are dry. May be secondary site of strep A infection. See health care provider.

### **Influenza H1N1**

***The information and recommendations are changing daily. Please refer to the District Website for updates.***

### **Influenza Seasonal**

Symptoms: Sudden onset of chills, body ache, headache, fever, dry cough, followed by sore throat, nasal congestion, productive cough, nausea, pink eye.

Source of Infection: Virus is spread directly through coughing, sneezing, and contact with respiratory secretions. Infectious 24 hours before symptoms appear and during acute phase of illness.

Incubation: 1-4 days

Recommendations: Exclude from school until clinically well and fever free, usually 2-7 days. Vaccine is available and needs to be administered annually.

### **Lice (pediculosis)**

Symptoms: Infestation of hair with adult lice, larvae and nits (eggs), which result in severe itching and excoriation of the scalp or body. Nits stick to hair, usually close to scalp at neckline and behind ears.

Source of Infestation: Direct contact with louse infested person, contact with infested hats, clothing, combs, brushes, bedding, upholstered furniture.

Incubation: Variable, eggs hatch in 6-10 days

Recommendations: Children diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Over-the-counter shampoos, crème rinses are available; directions should be followed carefully.

For more information: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html>

### **Meningitis**

Symptoms: Sudden onset of fever, headache, nausea, stiff neck, upper respiratory infection.

Source of Infection: *Viral* meningitis is relatively common and rarely serious.

*Bacterial* meningitis is much more acute and symptoms will progress quickly into petechial rash (dark red pinpoint, under skin), delirium, shock and coma. Call 911 immediately.

Incubation: Varies with viral meningitis. Bacterial meningitis spreads through respiratory secretions and incubates for 1-10 days.

Recommendations: See your health care provider immediately. Notify school if diagnosis is made. A vaccine is now available for bacterial meningitis and is encouraged for young adults.

### **Mononucleosis**

Symptoms: Fever, sore throat, swollen tonsils and lymph glands, fatigue, enlarged spleen

Source of Infection: Epstein-Barr virus spread by person-to-person oral saliva contact. Often called "the kissing disease".

Incubation: 30-50 days

Recommendations: See health care provider for evaluation of enlarged spleen, which may exclude student from contact sports for several weeks. Student should stay home from school until fever is gone 24 hours.

### **Pertussis/Whooping Cough**

Symptoms: Begins with a runny nose, low-grade fever and mild cough. In 7-14 days, a persistent cough develops that can occur in explosive bursts (paroxysmal or whooping cough), sometimes followed by vomiting. Coughing occurs more frequently at night. Symptoms are less severe in older children and adults, so they may unknowingly infect infants and preschoolers who are at risk for serious illness.

Source of Infection: *Bordetella pertussis*, a bacteria – carried in droplets from infected person.

Incubation: 4-21 days (usually 7-10) from exposure to symptoms

Recommendations: Protection from the vaccine begins to decrease 3 to 5 years after the last vaccination. Students with pertussis will be excluded from school until 5 days after appropriate

antibiotics have been started. Call your healthcare provider if you believe that you or your family has been exposed to pertussis. Immunization for pertussis is now available for all ages.

### **Pinworms**

Symptoms: Itching of the anal area, especially at night. Child may be fussy and wake often at night. It can take 2 to 8 weeks for symptoms to start.

Source: Spread by touching the anal area of infected person- i.e, while changing a diaper, handling contaminated pajamas, underwear, or bedding, or having contact with objects that have had contact with stool.

Incubation: As long as eggs are present. Eggs can cause infection even after being off of the body for 2 to 3 weeks.

Recommendations: No exclusion from school necessary. Call your Healthcare Provider if you suspect pinworms. The whole family may need to be examined. Your doctor may prescribe a medication.

### **Pneumonia**

Symptoms: Fever, fatigue, cough, shortness of breath, upper respiratory tract infection, ear infection, "rattly chest"

Source of Infection: Viral, bacterial, mycoplasma. Mycoplasma is the most common infectious agent in school-age children. Sputum and respiratory secretions spread illness.

Incubation: Depends on the germ that is causing the illness

Recommendation: Seek treatment from health care provider. Excluded from school until cough is somewhat controlled and fever is absent.

### **Ringworm (tinea corporis)**

Symptoms: Red scaly patch(es) on body, often ring-shaped with scaly edge, clearing in center. Itching is common.

Source of Infection: Direct contact with human or animal infected with the fungus.

Incubation: 4-10 days for body, 10-14 days for scalp and feet is unknown

Recommendations: Long-term treatment is usually necessary, Exclusion from school until treatment has been started or lesion cannot be completely covered. If on the scalp, until 24 hours after treatment has been started. Limit gym, swimming and other close contact activities if the lesion cannot be covered or until 72 hours after treatment has begun.

### **Scabies**

Symptoms: Infestation by impregnated female mite that burrows under the skin and deposits her eggs causing itching, scratch marks, burrow marks with tiny pink bumps or blisters. Common sites are trunk, extremities, hands, genital area. Scratching may cause secondary infection.

Source of Infection: Skin-to-skin contact, transfer from undergarments and bedding.

Incubation: 2-6 weeks

Recommendations: Exclude from school until 24 hours after being treated. Frequently, all family members are treated at the same time.

### **Scarlet Fever and Strep. Throat**

Symptoms: Sore, reddened throat, fever, swollen glands in the neck, headache, stomachache, nausea, "strawberry tongue". With scarlet fever, a sandpapery, fine pink-red rash may appear over the body.

Source of Infection: Group A streptococcus bacteria. A throat culture/rapid antigen strep test is the only way to determine if a sore throat is caused by bacteria or virus. Bacteria are spread airborne by droplets from cough, nasal discharge.

Incubation: 2-5 days

Recommendations: Student will be excluded from school until culture report is back or student has been treated with antibiotic for 24 hours.

### **Shingles (herpes zoster) Please Notify the Health Office if You Suspect Your Child Has Chicken Pox or Shingles**

Symptoms: Rash with clustered red bumps, blisters, and scabs that appear in crops of irregular fashion along unilateral nerve pathways. Pain and tingling accompany rash.

Source of Infection: Caused by chicken pox virus that redevelops in the body. Spread through respiratory tract secretions and discharge from rash.

Incubation: 12-16 days; most infectious 1-2 days before rash appears.

Recommendations: Exclusion from school until fever is gone. No exclusion if blisters can be completely covered by clothing or a bandage. If blisters **cannot** be covered, exclude until the blisters have crusted