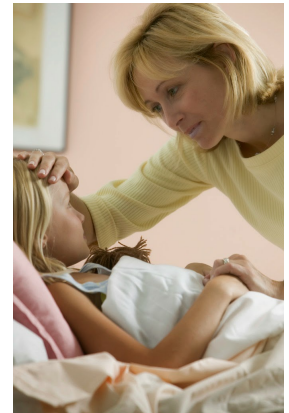


Cold, Flu and Allergy Season: Should I Keep My Child Home?

 cindyterebush.blogspot.ca/2014/10/cold-flu-and-allergy-season-should-i.html

It is a combination of cold, flu and allergy season. Noses could run for weeks. Coughs linger. Parents become unsure of their own judgment about when to send children to school and when to keep them home. Sometimes, the decision is complicated by the obligations of being working parents. Some daycare centers offer sick care. If yours does not, you need to know that you will miss time at work for your child's illnesses if you are unable to arrange for care with friends, family or other babysitters. So, when making that hard decision, consider the following:



- **Children must be fever, vomit and diarrhea free or on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours.** This is not only good advice. It is the law in most places. Your child may seem fine but don't forget that his/her own immune system is weak while still recovering from fever, infection or stomach virus. You are not only protecting the other children by abiding by the 24 hour regulations. You are protecting your own child from relapsing or catching a new bug.
- **Watch your child's level of activity.** If your child is lethargic, slow moving, uninterested in surroundings and less active than normal, your child may be ill. Think about how you feel when a cold or virus is coming on. Remember that foggy, tired feeling that precedes other symptoms? Your lethargic child may be feeling those symptoms. If your child was recently ill and is still not active, he/she is still not feeling well. The best place for your child is home.
- **Look at your child and think – If I felt like that, could I be productive?** Going to school is your child's version of going to work. When symptoms such as stuffy, runny noses and coughing are severe, your child cannot function any better than you would.
- **Don't ignore skin rashes, bumps and blisters.** Many childhood maladies are exhibited through skin changes. Most schools require a doctor's note indicating that your child is not contagious whenever there is a rash or other skin change. Mystery rashes can occur at the beginning of an illness or the end. Be sure to seek a doctor's advice before sending your child to school or to any activity that involves contact with other people.
- **Runny noses linger. Coughs linger. If your child is active, alert and seems to just have the remnants of cold or flu, they can come to school but don't completely ignore the symptoms.** How many times have you had a cough that just wouldn't go away and then you found out that it was bronchitis? Have you had that lingering, stuffy nose and needed antibiotic for a sinus infection? Young children cannot always describe how they feel accurately. While we now know that green mucous isn't always a sign of infection, it may be. Check with your doctor to see how long lingering symptoms should linger without being checked.
- **Help us to limit contagion by teaching the "into the elbow" sneeze and cough.** Less germs are spread when we sneeze or cough into our elbow rather than our hands. Remind child to not only cover their mouths but to do so with the inside of their bent elbows.
- **Red eyes aren't always allergies.** Red eyes are another symptom that will take you to a doctor's

office. Only a doctor can tell you if your child has an eye infection and schools won't take that risk.

Are you unsure of the regulations for illness in your local area? Ask your school principal, director or nurse for the list of symptoms that require you to keep children at home. Did I forget any important guidelines for parents? Feel free to add them to the comment section under this article so we can share tips and knowledge with other readers.

Feel well and be sure to stay home when you feel sick, too!

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