

The nice weather has been a positive boost this winter, although it has not eliminated viral illnesses that spread throughout schools and households.

Handwashing is still the best action to take against sickness, also learning to cough or sneeze into your arm or shoulder can keep germs from passing from our hands to multiple other people or objects. With rising influenza cases and the discontinuation of isolation with Covid, I want to remind everyone about some general safety practices.

Children need to stay home from school if the illness prevents the child from participating *comfortably* in school activities or if there is risk of spreading disease to others. Reasons to stay home include:

1. **Fever:** The child should stay home until 24 hours of no fever, without using fever-reducing medications, such as Tylenol or Motrin ***Fever = 100°F or higher

2. **Vomiting/Diarrhea/Abdominal Pain:** The child should stay home if they have abdominal pain along with any other symptoms. The child should have no vomiting or loose stools for 24 hours before returning to school.

3. **Skin Rash:** The child with a rash AND any other symptom such as fever, runny or stuffy nose or a change in behavior, should be kept home.

4. **Eye Drainage:** Students with a red eye (or eyes) that also have pain and ANY clear or yellow drainage should be kept home.

5. **Cough/Sore Throat:** Children may have coughs with sore throats for some time after an illness. Any time the child has a fever, or severe cough, or difficulty breathing, they need to stay home. Students with strep throat may return the day after starting antibiotics as long as there is no fever present.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns that you might have. I wish you all a safe and healthy spring.

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