

Sniffles? Upset Tummy? Fever?

When—and When Not—to Send Your Child to School

For students and parents, when does “I don’t feel well” mean “too sick for school”? Going to school every day is important, and missing just a few days can have a negative impact on learning and achievement. But when a sick child goes to school, she or he can get even sicker—and can spread germs to classmates, teachers and other school staff.

Use this handy checklist from school health staff at City Schools and the Baltimore City Health Department to help you make the decision about whether to keep your child home.

If you’re still not sure whether to send your child to school, call your doctor or the health suite at your child’s school. And if you do send your child to school with sniffles or a cough, make sure the school office has your current contact number on file so staff can get in touch if he or she feels worse over the course of the day.

When your child returns to school after being home sick, remember to send in a note explaining the absence.



Send me to school if...

- I have a runny nose or just a little cough, but no other symptoms.
- I haven’t taken any fever reducing medicine for 24 hours, and I haven’t had a fever in that time.
- I haven’t thrown up or had any diarrhea for 24 hours.



Keep me at home if...

- I have a fever higher than 99.6°F.
- I’m throwing up or have diarrhea.
- My eyes are pink and crusty.
- I have a cough that keeps me awake and makes it hard to do my school work.
- I have a sore throat.
- If there’s something wrong that means I can’t concentrate, like a bad headache or an upset stomach.



Call the doctor if...

- I have a fever higher than 99.6°F for more than two days.
- I’ve been throwing up or have diarrhea for more than two days.
- I’ve had the sniffles for more than a week, and they aren’t getting better.
- I still have asthma symptoms after using my regular asthma medication (and call 911 if I’m having trouble breathing after using an inhaler).
- I don’t have much energy, and I can’t concentrate.