

Is Your Child Well Enough to Attend Child Care?

Health Information

It is not always easy to decide if your child is sick enough to stay home or well enough to be in child care. Children who come to child care are expected, with few exceptions, to participate fully in activities. Here are some guidelines for parents and providers to help in decision-making regarding keeping a child home or sending a child to child care:

PARENTS: When to Keep Your Child Home

- 1) **Fever:** A fever of 100° or more signals an illness that is probably going to make a child uncomfortable and unable to function well in a child care setting. Your child should stay home until he/she is feeling better.
- 2) **Vomiting, Diarrhea or Severe Nausea:** These are symptoms that require a child to remain at home until a normal diet is tolerated the night before and the next morning.
- 3) **Infectious Diseases:** Diseases such as impetigo, pink eye with thick drainage, and strep throat require a doctor's examination and prescription for medication. Children may not return to child care until a doctor has been contacted, medication has been started and the child is feeling better. *****Children with chicken pox may return to child care when all the scabs are completely dried and no lesions are developing (usually 5-7 days).*****
- 4) **Rashes:** Rashes or patches of broken, itchy skin need to be examined by a doctor if they appear to be spreading or not improving
- 5) **Injuries:** If a child has an injury that causes continuous discomfort, the child should not attend child care until a doctor checks the condition or it improves.

PROVIDERS: When to Ask Parents/Guardians to Take Children Home

- 1) **Fever:** Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100° F or higher taken under the arm, 101° F if taken orally, or 102° F taken rectally. For children 4 months or younger, the lower rectal temperature of 101° is considered a fever threshold.
- 2) **Diarrhea:** runny, watery, or bloody stools
- 3) **Vomiting:** 2 or more times in a 24-hour period
- 4) **Body Rash with Fever**
- 5) **Sore Throat with Fever and Swollen Glands**
- 6) **Severe Coughing:** child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing
- 7) **Eye Discharge:** thick mucus or puss draining from the eye, or pink eye.
- 8) **Yellowish skin or eyes**
- 9) **Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than you can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in your care**