

Appendix A

Signs and Symptoms Chart Reference for the Health Office

Symptom	Common Causes	Complaint/Observation	Notify Parent	Send Home from School	Re-admit When
Common Cold	Viruses	Nasal congestion and drainage; cough; watery eyes; fever.	Yes	No, unless there is fever with behavior change; difficulty breathing; child looks or acts very ill.	Criteria for sending home is resolved
Cough	Common cold; lower respiratory infection (pneumonia); croup; asthma; sinus infection; bronchitis.	Dry or wet cough; runny nose; sore throat; hoarse voice; barking cough.	Yes	No, unless there severe cough; rapid and/or difficulty breathing; wheezing that is not responsive to inhaler; cyanosis	Criteria for sending home is resolved
Diarrhea	Usually viral; less commonly bacterial or parasitic.	Frequent loose stools compared to child's normal pattern; abdominal cramps; fever.	Yes	Yes, if diarrhea is causing accidents for toilet trained children; stool is not contained in diaper; blood or mucus in stool; fever with behavior change; looks or acts very ill.	No further accidents; cleared by physician for any bacterial or parasitic infection; able to participate.
Difficult or noisy breathing	Common cold; croup; asthma; bronchitis; epiglottitis; pneumonia; object stuck in throat.	Common cold-stuffy nose, sore throat, cough; croup-barking cough, hoarse, fever; very noisy breathing; Asthma- child is working hard to breath, rapid breathing, wheezing; Epiglottitis- gasping for breath with mouth wide open, high fever, drooling, cyanotic.	Yes	Yes, if child has difficult or labored breathing; fever accompanied by behavior changes; child looks or acts very ill; blue color to lips/skin; new onset of wheezing; child with known diagnosis of asthma does not respond to rescue inhaler.	Criteria for sending home is resolved
Earache	Bacterial or viral; often occurs with common cold.	Fever, pain or irritability; difficulty hearing; blocked ears; drainage, swelling around ear.	Yes	No, unless unable to participate or has fever with behavior change.	Criteria for sending home is resolved
Eye Irritation, Pink Eye	Bacterial or viral conjunctivitis; allergic or chemical irritation.	Bacterial infection- pinkeye with yellow/green discharge that is crusted on eyelids in morning. Viral infection- pinkeye with swelling and watery discharge. Allergic and chemical irritation- red, tearing and itchy eyes, runny nose	Yes	No, unless child is too ill to participate. Yes, if student has severe sensitivity to light, pain or swelling- seek medical attention for evaluation.	Criteria for sending home is resolved
Fever	Viral, bacterial or parasitic infection; overheating; reaction to medication.	Flushing, tired, irritable, decreased activity. Fever alone is not harmful. Elevated body temperature is defense against infection. Rapid elevation of temperature sometimes triggers a febrile seizure in children 6 and under.	Yes	No, unless fever is 100.5 or more orally (or 101 taken rectally, by ear or temporal scan); behavior change; unable to participate.	Criteria for sending home is resolved; Able to participate
Headache	Bacterial or viral infection; other noninfectious causes.	Tired an irritable. May occur with other symptoms.	Yes	No, unless child is unable to participate. A case of sudden, severe headache with vomiting and stiff neck might signal meningitis and requires prompt medical evaluation.	Able to participate

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Symptom	Common Causes	Complaint/Observation	Notify Parent	Send Home from School	Re-admit When
Itching	Ringworm; chickenpox; pinworm; scabies; allergic or irritant reaction; dry skin or eczema; impetigo.	Ringworm- itchy ring shaped patches on skin or bald patches on scalp; Chickenpox- blister like spots on face, scalp and body, irritable, fever; Pinworm- anal itching; Scabies- severely itchy red bumps on warm areas of body, especially between fingers and toes.	Yes; notify school nurse/ public health if cluster of cases	Yes, for chicken-pox, scabies and impetigo. For ringworm, student may stay in school until the end of day if lesion can be covered. If lesion cannot be covered, send home. Seek medical attention for treatment of scabies, impetigo and ringworm.	Criteria for sending home is resolved. For conditions that require topical treatment and/or oral medication, student may return 24 hours after treatment is started. Chicken-pox- all lesions must be crusted over.
Mouth Sores	Oral thrush (yeast infection); herpes or coxsackievirus infection; canker sores.	Oral thrush- white patches on tongue and along cheeks. Herpes or coxsackievirus infection- pain on swallowing; fever; yellowish spots in mouth; fever blister. Canker sores- painful ulcers on cheeks or gums.	Yes	No, unless drooling steadily related to mouth sores, unable to participate. .	Able to participate.
Rash	Many causes. Viral- roseola infantum, fifth disease, chickenpox, herpes virus, warts; cold sores; shingles. Skin infections and infestations- ringworm; scabies; impetigo; abscess; cellulitis.	Skin may show similar findings with many different causes. Determining causes of rash requires evaluation by health professional. Viral- each viral rash may have a distinctive appearance. Usually signs of general illness with fever, runny nose, cough. Minor skin infections- see itching. More serious skin infections: redness, pain, fever, pus. Severe bacterial infections are rare- fever, rash, and very ill.	Yes; notify school nurse/ public health if cluster of cases	Yes, if rash is undiagnosed/treated; rash is accompanied with fever and behavior change; joint pain is present with rash; drainage from any lesions; bruising not associated with injury	On antibiotic ointment at least 24 hours. Able to participate in daily activities. Criteria for sending home is resolved.
Sore Throat	Viral- common cold viruses that cause upper respiratory symptoms. Strep throat.	Viral- complaint of sore throat and cold symptoms. Strep-throat- red tissue with white patches; enlarged tonsils and swollen lymph nodes.	Yes	No, unless unable to swallow; excessive drooling with breathing; fever with behavior change.	Able to swallow. Able to participate. On medication at least 24 hours (if strep).
Stomachache	Viral gastroenteritis or strep throat. Problems with internal organs of abdomen such as intestine, colon, liver, bladder.	Vomiting and diarrhea or cramping are signs of viral infection. Problems with internal organs of abdomen- persistent severe pain in abdomen.	Yes	No, unless severe abdominal pain or pain after injury; diarrhea or vomiting; bloody/black stools; fever with behavioral change.	Pain resolves. Able to participate.
Vomiting	Viral infection of stomach or intestines. Coughing strongly. Other viral illnesses with fever.	Diarrhea, vomiting and/or cramping for viral gastroenteritis.	Yes	Yes, if vomited more than 2 times in 24 hours; vomiting and fever; recent history of head injury; looks or acts very ill.	Vomiting ends.

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