



Sick Days and Children (a Guide for Parents and Caregivers)



Overview

It's a weekday, and your child doesn't feel well. Should you keep them home? Here are some tips to help you make the right call.

Know the policy

First, know the sick day policy of your child's school or daycare. They may have very specific rules that you should follow. But basically: fever, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea are signs that your child must stay home. A child with pinkeye must stay home, too. Your child needs to stay home so these diseases don't spread.

Minor symptoms

What if they don't have one of these issues, but still say they don't feel well? A child doesn't need to stay home for every stuffy nose or a minor cough. Tissues, plenty of fluids and other simple remedies can help them get through the day. Did they have a sleepless night? Do they seem sick to you? You'll need to decide if they seem well enough to go.

Trial period

If you think they may perk up during the day, consider sending them for the first part of the day to see how they do. Often, kids feel better after they get up and get moving. But if they still feel bad after a few hours, pick them up.

Conclusion

Finally, know that there isn't always one right answer for when to keep a child home. You know your child. So trust your instincts. And always contact your child's doctor if you feel something is wrong.