



HEALTH TIPS FOR PARENTS FROM THE SCHOOL NURSES

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS:

Cold - A Respiratory illness with a gradual onset - low-grade or no fever, a bit of a sore throat initially, nasal congestion and sneezing

Influenza ("Flu") - A Respiratory illness characterized by Fever (usually high), Chills, Headache, Tiredness, Dry Cough, Sore throat, Stuffy nose, and Body aches. Flu shots are highly recommended to prevent influenza. (Diarrhea and vomiting do NOT occur often, but may occur, along with the respiratory symptoms, in children. The illness that some call "stomach flu" is most likely gastroenteritis.)

Strep Throat - Sore throat, decreased appetite, stomach ache including nausea/vomiting, fever, back of throat may look bright red and may have white patches. Some cases of strep may result in a skin rash that looks like "gooseflesh on sunburn". This is the rash of "scarlet fever". Occasional cases may include peeling of skin on fingers or toes.

Gastroenteritis - Diarrhea and vomiting, low-grade fever, headache and muscle aches. In young children rotavirus is the most common cause, although many other viruses can cause diarrhea and vomiting.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES:

- Teach children to cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time they are washed.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Children with bacterial infections like strep should be **on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

- **ANY CHILD WHO IS SICK SHOULD BE FREE FROM FEVER FOR 24 HOURS (without Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.** If your child goes home with fever on Monday - **do not** send him/her to school on Tuesday as children's temps are generally low in the morning and rise throughout the day. If they are home without fever all day Tuesday without any fever altering medication, they may return to school Wednesday.
- Seek medical attention if your child has: difficulty breathing, bluish skin color, not taking enough fluids, not waking up and interacting, severe irritability, fever with a rash, or appears to improve and then runs fever with a worse cough.

CALL YOUR SCHOOL NURSE WITH HEALTH QUESTIONS!