Management of Common Infectious Illnesses

Chickenpox (Varicella)

A highly contagious illness caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). Children initially may present with fatigue, decreased appetite, fever, headache, sore throat, cough, runny nose, or stomach ache followed by a rash.

- **Appearance of rash**- itchy red fluid filled blisters starting on chest, abdomen, back and face, but will eventually spread to the entire body.
- **Treatment**- allow the child to rest, increase and encourage fluids to stay hydrated, use acetaminophen for fever and pain, use calamine lotion for itch and in some severe cases an antiviral medication may be prescribed. **DO NOT TREAT WITH ASPIRIN** as it may cause Reye’s syndrome, a severe disease that affects the liver and brain.
- **How it spreads**- airborne respiratory droplets (cough or sneeze), saliva (kissing, shared drinks), skin to skin (handshaking, hugs), or touching a contaminated surface.

Children who have had their varicella vaccine can still get chickenpox however symptoms are much lighter with mild or no fever and few or no blisters at all. **A student may return to school once all blisters are completely crusted over.**

[https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/index.html)
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Inflammation or infection of the thin layer (conjunctiva) that lines the inside of the eyelid and covers the white part of the eyeball.

- **Appearance**: pink or red color in the whites of the eyes, swollen eyelids, increased tear production, itchy, irritation or burning to the eyes, urge to rub eye, pus or mucus discharge, crusting of eyelids or lashes, eyelids stuck together in the morning.
  a) **Bacterial**: pus or mucus like discharge, usually starts in one eye, but because it is **HIGHLY** contagious it most likely will infect the other eye.
  b) **Viral**: accompanied by a cold virus and usually affects both eyes, but may start in one eye, watery discharge noted
  c) **Allergic**: tearing, itchy and swelling to both eyes
- **Treatment**: Viral conjunctivitis will clear up on its own often without the need of medication. Bacterial conjunctivitis is treated with antibiotic eye drops or ointment. Allergic conjunctivitis can be treated with allergy meds like antihistamine or vasoconstrictive eye drops, but in some cases oral medication is indicated.
- **How it spreads**: airborne respiratory droplets (cough or sneeze), skin to skin (handshaking or hugs) and touching a contaminated surface.

A student may return to school once any indicated therapy has been implemented or a doctor’s note is provided, but no swimming is allowed.

https://www.cdc.gov/conjunctivitis/index.html
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Coxsackie (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease)

A highly contagious infection caused by the Coxsackie virus (enterovirus). Symptoms include decrease in appetite, fever, runny nose, sore throat, mouth sores and a rash.

- **Appearance of rash** - flat or slightly raised red spots on palms of hands and soles of feet. Can also develop on buttocks, legs, and arms. Not usually itchy and if fluid filled blisters form, do not touch them.

- **Treatment** - Take over-the-counter medication to relieve fever and pain caused by mouth sores like acetaminophen and ibuprofen, but NO ASPIRIN should be given to children), staying hydrated is very important especially with children who have pain due to mouth sores. See physician if fever lasts more than 3 days, if child is experiencing severe symptoms or if no improvement is seen after 10 days.

- **How it spreads** - airborne respiratory droplets (cough or sneeze), saliva (kissing or shared drinks), skin to skin (handshaking or hugs), touching a contaminated surface. Usually most contagious the first week.

Practicing hand hygiene is a simple yet effective way to prevent infections. Cleaning and disinfecting high touch areas will help prevent the spread of infection as well. **Students may return to school with a doctor's note and after they are fever free for 24 hrs without the use of medication.**

[https://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/about/transmission.html](https://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/about/transmission.html)
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Hepatitis

An inflammation of the liver that can cause a range of health problems and can be fatal.

- **Hepatitis A**- a vaccine preventable liver infection caused by hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV is found in stool and blood of people who are infected. Hepatitis A is very contagious and spreads when someone unknowingly ingests the virus even in microscopic amounts through close personal contact with an infected person or through eating contaminated food or drink.
  - **Symptoms**- Fatigue, nausea, stomach pain and jaundice
  - **Treatment**- With plenty of rest and adequate hydration, conditions clear up on its own, but it can take weeks to months. Preventative measures and self-care are vital.

- **Hepatitis B**- a vaccine preventable liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV). HBV is spread through sexual contact, sharing needles, syringes or other drug-injection equipment; or during pregnancy or delivery.
  - **Symptoms**- Fatigue, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, and jaundice
  - **Treatment**- treat the symptoms with appropriate over-the-counter (OTC) medications, stay adequately hydrated. Preventative measures and self-care are vital.

- **Hepatitis C**- a liver infection caused by the hepatitis C virus. It is spread through contact with blood from an infected person (sharing needles). More than 50% of people who become infected will have chronic long-term health problems including the possibility of cirrhosis and liver cancer. There are no symptoms of hepatitis C and one does not feel sick. Preventative care is not available for hepatitis C virus. Treatment includes direct-acting antiviral (DAA) medications for 8-12 weeks.

- **Hepatitis D**- a liver infection caused by the hepatitis D virus and only occurs in people who are also infected with hepatitis B virus. It is spread through contact with blood or other bodily fluids of an infected person with hepatitis D virus. Hepatitis D can be acute, short term, or a long-term infection.
  - **Symptoms**- Fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, pale-colored stools, and jaundice. Some may not have any symptoms at all.
  - **Treatment**- Increase fluids and stay adequately hydrated and treat symptoms accordingly with OTC medications. Chronic or long-term infections may be treated with interferon medications for 24-48 weeks.

- **Hepatitis E**- a liver infection caused by the hepatitis E virus (HEV). HEV is found in the stool of an infected person. It is spread when someone unknowingly ingests the virus by drinking contaminated water or eating raw or undercooked meats like pork, venison, wild boar, or shellfish. No vaccine for HEV, but most people fully recover without complications.
  - **Symptoms**- many especially young children have no symptoms, but those that do can experience fatigue, poor appetite, stomach pain, nausea and jaundice.
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- **Treatments**- resolves on its own with adequate rest and hydration. One should also treat with appropriate OTC medications as needed.

Those infected with any hepatitis virus should speak with a physician before taking medications like acetaminophen that can further damage the liver. **A student may return to school with written permission from their physician.**

[https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/index.htm)
Impetigo

A highly contagious skin infection caused by streptococcus pyogenes bacteria or staphylococcus aureus bacteria. It mainly affects infants and young children and the only symptoms are red sores that may itch.

- **Appearance**- red sores develop on the face especially around nose and mouth, but can also be found on hands and feet. Sores will rupture, drain for a few days and then form a yellow-brownish scab.
- **Treatment**- physician will prescribe oral antibiotics, but may also prescribe topical antibiotics as well.
- **How it spreads**- one can contract the infection if they come in contact with the sores or the drainage by directly touching them or touching contaminated surfaces or items like toys or clothing.

Many times, impetigo develops with skin that is broken or already irritated by other skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis or poison ivy. Hand hygiene is extremely important because bacteria harmlessly lives on our skin, but it can enter our body through broken skin by a cut or scratch or other skin condition leading to impetigo. A student may return to school 24hrs after the start of oral antibiotic treatment. If scabs have formed and there is no drainage from the sores, then it does not need to be covered. No swimming is allowed.

Measles (Rubeola)

A highly contagious viral infection caused by the measles virus. Symptoms that appear 10-14 days after exposure are fever, fatigue, cough, sore throat, runny nose, diarrhea, loss of appetite, inflamed eyes and a skin rash.

- **Appearance of rash** - Small red spots with some being slightly raised. Spots and bumps in tight clusters give the skin a blotchy red appearance. First the face will break out, then spread down to the arms, chest, back, then over thighs, lower legs and feet.

- **Treatment** - no medical treatment as the virus will run its course. Use OTC medications to treat symptoms, be sure to stay adequately hydrated and get plenty of rest.

- **How it spreads** - airborne respiratory droplets (cough, sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), skin to skin (hugs, handshaking) or touching contaminated surfaces.

The best protection against measles is the MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine. **A student may return to school four days after the appearance of a rash.**

[https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/faqs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/faqs.html)
Mumps

A contagious viral infection that affects the salivary and parotid glands. Not everyone has symptoms, but those that do can experience painful swollen glands, difficulty chewing, pain and tenderness of the testicles, fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and loss of appetite.

- **Appearance** - puffy cheeks, tender and swollen jaw
- **Treatment** - Get plenty of rest and adequate intake of fluids, treat pain and fever with OTC medications like ibuprofen or acetaminophen. The infection should pass in 1-2 weeks.
- **How it spreads** - airborne respiratory droplets (coughing and sneezing), saliva (kissing or sharing drinks), touching contaminated surfaces.

A student may return to school 48 hours after swelling of glands has subsided or nine days after symptoms began, whichever comes first.

[https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html)
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Pediculosis Capitis (head lice)

A condition in which tiny insects infest the scalp. Symptoms include itchy, visible lice on the scalp and lice eggs (nits) on the hair shaft. Lice only crawl and do not jump or fly. Nits are smaller, white gray in color and are firmly attached to the hair close to the scalp.

- **Treatment** - Over-the-counter shampoos and lotions available in most drug stores and pharmacies.
- **How it spreads** - sharing personal items such as brushes, hats, or scarves

Patiently combing and removing nits, sometimes over several days, is sometimes necessary. A student may return to school after 24hrs and a lice treatment has been completed. Parents must bring student and box of treatment to the nurse’s office. Nurse will check the student and if no crawling lice is noted, the student may return to class. If after a full treatment crawling louse is still visible, the student should see his/her physician.

[https://www.cdc.gov/dpdx/pediculosis/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/dpdx/pediculosis/index.html)
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Pertussis (whooping cough)

A highly contagious respiratory tract infection caused by the bacterium Bordetella pertussis. It presents with a severe hacking cough followed by a high-pitched intake of breath that sounds like a “whoop.” Other symptoms include runny nose, nasal congestion, vomiting, mild fever, watery red eyes and sneezing. Pertussis is easily preventable with a vaccine.

- **Treatment**- physicians will prescribe antibiotics, but getting plenty of rest and increasing fluid intake is also important.
- **How it spreads**- airborne (coughing or sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), and skin to skin (hand shaking and hugs)

A student may return to school with written permission from a physician and no less than five days after the start of antibiotics.

https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/index.html
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Pinworms

The pinworm also known as threadworm or seatworm is a small parasitic thin, white round worm (nematode) called Enterobius vermicularis that sometimes lives in the colon and rectum. A pinworm infection causes itching around the perianal area (vaginal itching in females) which leads to difficulty sleeping and restlessness.

- **Treatment**- Antiparasitic medications will be prescribed, but some are also available OTC. Some physicians may recommend that all family members or caregivers get treatment as well to reduce risk of reinfection. Wash the perianal area with soap and water and avoid scratching the area.

- **How it spreads**- Fecal-oral route which is the transfer of infective pinworm eggs from anus to someone’s mouth either directly by hand or indirectly through contaminated clothing, bedding, food or other articles.

**HAND HYGIENE** is the most important thing one can do to avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of infection. Keeping fingernails short in small children can also help deter the spread of bacteria. A student may not return to school until he/she has been treated with antiparasitic medication.

[https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/pinworm/gen_info/faqs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/pinworm/gen_info/faqs.html)
Ringworm

A highly contagious fungal infection of the skin or scalp. Ringworm of the scalp is common in children and may cause bald spots. It is also called “tinea” and “dermatophytosis.” Ringworm on the feet is called an “athlete’s foot.”

- **Appearance of rash** - scaly reddened ring shaped that may be itchy. Some also experience darkening of the skin, fissures, and hair loss.
- **Treatment** - OTC antifungal creams or powders for 2-4 weeks. Ringworm of the scalp needs to be treated with oral prescription antifungal medication for 1-3 months.
- **How it spreads** - Skin to skin (handshaking, hugs), touching a contaminated surface.

Avoid going to bed with wet hair as fungus and bacteria will harbor in moist areas and can also contaminate your bed sheets. **A student may return to school 24hrs after treatment has been initiated and may also remain uncovered.**

https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/ringworm/index.html
Rubella (German measles)

A highly contagious viral infection caused by the virus RuV. Most will experience mild symptoms of low-grade fever, headache, sore throat and then a rash that starts on the face or behind ears and spreads to the rest of the body. Other symptoms may include fatigue, enlarged lymph nodes, runny nose, and eye redness.

- **Appearance of rash** - Spotty red and may be raised. Resembles measles rash, but not as bright red.
- **Treatment** - treat with OTC medications as needed, get plenty of rest and adequate fluids.
- **How it spreads** - Airborne (coughing, sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks)

Rubella is easily preventable with the MMR vaccine and is declared eliminated in the United States. A student may return to school one week after a rash appears.

[https://www.cdc.gov/rubella/about/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/rubella/about/symptoms.html)
Scabies

A contagious skin infestation by the human itch mite (Sarcoptes scabiei var. hominis). These mites will burrow into the upper layer of skin where they live and lay eggs. Most common symptoms are intense itching and a rash.

- **Appearance of rash**- pimple like
- **Treatment**- antiparasitic medications (usually topical) for 1-2 weeks
- **How it spreads**- direct physical contact with infected person (skin to skin)

A student must contact MD for treatment and remain home 24hrs under prescription.

https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/index.html

Scarlet Fever

A contagious bacterial illness that happens in children ages 5-15 years old and who also have strep throat. Strep bacteria will produce a toxin that will cause a rash. Symptoms are flu like with a high
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fever, sore throat, fatigue, painful swallowing, nausea, enlarged lymph nodes, swollen tongue or tonsils, and a rash all over the body.

- **Appearance of rash**- small raised bumps that will start on the chest and spread most of the body. It appears 12-48 hrs after flu-like symptoms begin.
- **Treatment**- Must be treated with antibiotics and use OTC medications to treat other symptoms like fever. Stay well hydrated and increase fluid intake along with plenty of rest.
- **How it spreads**- airborne (cough, sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), skin to skin (handshaking, hugs)

A student may return to school 24hrs after having started antibiotics.


Shingles (Herpes Zoster)

A viral infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus. Anyone who has had chickenpox may develop shingles. Symptoms include painful itchy rash, fever, fatigue, headache, chills, and upset stomach. The varicella-zoster virus is the same virus that causes chickenpox. The virus stays dormant (inactive) in the body and can reactivate as shingles later in life.

- **Appearance of rash**- stripe of red blisters on the trunk of body or on face. Pain can persist after rash is gone (postherpetic neuralgia)
- **Treatment**- antiviral meds to fight the virus and OTC pain meds to help with the discomfort
- **How it spreads**-direct contact with the rash when it is in the blister phase. No longer contagious once scabs have formed.

An immunocompromised student with shingles will stay home until blisters have scabbed over. All other students who can cover the blisters may attend school, however a student who cannot cover the rash (face, neck, possibly arms/legs) will have to stay home until blisters have crusted over.

https://www.cdc.gov/shingles/index.html
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Strep Throat

A contagious bacterial infection caused by the group A strep bacteria (streptococcus). Symptoms include sore throat, fever, chills, headache, fatigue, swollen tonsils and swollen lymph nodes.

- **Appearance** - Throat will be red, tonsils may be swollen with white patches or streaks of pus. Tiny red spots may be noted on the roof of the mouth as well.
- **Treatment** - Antibiotics to fight the infection. Give OTC meds to treat pain and fever, provide lots of rest and be sure to have plenty of fluids to stay adequately hydrated.
- **How it spreads** - Airborne (coughing, sneezing), saliva (kissing or sharing drinks)

A student may return to school 24hrs after starting antibiotics.


Tuberculosis (TB)

A potentially serious bacterial infection caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis. This bacterium will most often attack the lungs, but can affect any part of the body including the kidneys, the spine and the brain. Most will not have symptoms, but those that do will experience a cough (sometimes
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blood-tinged), fever, chills, night sweats, fatigue, loss of appetite, unintentional weight loss, chest pain, shortness of breath, and swollen lymph nodes.

- **Treatment**- Antibiotics will be prescribed for active TB for a duration of 6-12 months. Always important to stay well hydrated and get plenty of rest. Treat other symptoms with OTC medication as needed. Those without symptoms may not be required to take antibiotics.

- **How it spreads**- Airborne (cough, sneeze)

A student can return to school with a note from the MD.

[https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/basics/default.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/basics/default.htm)

**Flu (Influenza)**

A contagious infection caused by the influenza virus that affects the nose, throat and lungs. Symptoms include fever, chills, muscle aches, fatigue, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, chest pressure, shortness of breath, headache, loss of appetite, nausea, and swollen lymph nodes.

- **Treatment**- the virus will run its course and one should focus on getting lots of rest and plenty of fluids to stay well hydrated. Treat other symptoms with OTC meds like decongestants, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.

- **How it spreads**- Airborne (cough, sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), skin to skin (handshaking, hugs) and touching a contaminated surface.

An annual flu vaccine can prevent or lessen the severity and complications if one still contracts the virus. A student is allowed to return to school 48hrs after diagnosis and is fever free for 24hrs without the use of medication.

[https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm)
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Fifth Disease

A contagious mild illness caused by the parvovirus B19. Symptoms include slight fever, upset stomach, runny nose, headache, sore throat, fatigue, itching and a rash.

- **Appearance of rash** - bright red facial rash ("slapped cheek") that can spread to body, arms and legs.
- **Treatment** - the virus will run its course and go away on its own. Treat the symptoms with OTC medication as needed and monitor for improvement.
- **How it spreads** - airborne (coughing, sneezing), saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), skin to skin (hugs, hand shaking), touching a contaminated surface.

Once the facial rash appears, fifth disease is no longer contagious. **A student does not have to isolate and stay home unless he/she has a fever. Those that are immunosuppressed or pregnant should avoid contact with someone who has fifth disease.**

https://www.cdc.gov/parvovirusb19/index.html

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)
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A very highly contagious disease caused by a virus named SAR-CoV-2. One can experience flu like symptoms such as sore throat, fever, chills, cough, runny nose, congestion, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle aches and headache. Other common symptoms are new loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Severity of disease and symptoms may change with covid-19 variants and vaccination status. **Seek emergency medical care immediately if you have trouble breathing, persistent chest pain or pressure, new confusion, inability to awake or stay awake, pale, gray or blue-colored skin, lips or nail beds, depending on skin tone.**

- **Treatment** - FDA has approved some antiviral medications for covid-19, but most experience mild symptoms and recover on their own with OTC medications to treat symptoms, plenty of rest and lots of fluids.
- **How it spreads** - airborne droplets (cough, sneeze) saliva (kissing, sharing drinks), touching a contaminated surface

A student must isolate at home for 48hrs after diagnosis and pending they are fever free for 24hrs without the use of medication, the student may return to school.

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Gastrointestinal Illnesses

Rotavirus

A highly contagious virus that causes serious gastrointestinal symptoms such as severe watery diarrhea, vomiting, fever and abdominal pain. These symptoms on average last 4-6 days at which time the person is infectious.

- **Treatment**: due to the diarrhea and vomiting, hydration is of the utmost importance. Treat symptoms with OTC medication and get adequate rest.
- **How it spreads**: this virus is found in stool and therefore is transmitted between hand and mouth. Touching a contaminated item or surface or handshaking with someone who’s hands are contaminated are ways of transmission.

A student may not return to school until the diarrhea has completely subsided and has not had an episode of diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24hrs.

[https://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/index.html)

Norovirus

A highly contagious virus that causes vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. Other symptoms may include mild fever, headaches, chills and muscle aches. Virus usually lasts 1-2 days, but can take as many as 6 days to be rid of symptoms.

- **Treatment**: there is no treatment for the norovirus as it must run its course. It is important to stay well hydrated and get plenty of rest. One should treat symptoms with OTC medication.
- **How it spreads**: touching a contaminated item or surface, handshaking with someone who has contaminated hands.

A student cannot return to school until vomiting and diarrhea has stopped for 24 hrs.

[https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html)

Fever

Any student with a fever of 100 or higher will be sent home and cannot return to school the following day. The student may return to school once they are fever free for 24hrs without the use of medication.

Vomiting/Diarrhea

Any student who vomits or has diarrhea in school will be sent home and cannot return to school the following day. The student may return once the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24hrs.

12/2023
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SCHOOL YEAR 23-24

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