



Common Illnesses



Cold and Flu Watch

If your child comes down with the cold or flu, watch carefully for signs of complications. Seek medical attention if your child has the following:

- Difficulty breathing
- Appears limp or extremely weak
- Confused or does not respond
- Has a fever over 103 or a fever that lasts more than 48 hours
- Dry mouth
- No urine output for 8 hours

If your child experiences any of the above symptoms or you have questions, please call the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line at Children's Mercy Hospital at (816)-234-3188.

Remember, children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.



Your child may have been exposed to:

Chickenpox

Chickenpox is a viral illness. It is common for children to get chickenpox. It may be prevented by vaccination.

If you think your child has Chickenpox:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare and School:

Yes, **until all the blisters have dried into scabs. This is usually by day 6 after the rash began.**

This is true even if the child has been vaccinated.

DO NOT give aspirin or salicylate-containing medicines to anyone under 18 years of age.

Symptoms

Your child will have a rash that begins as red bumps and may have a fever.

If your child is infected, it may take 10-21 days for symptoms to begin.

Spread

- By touching the blister fluid or secretions from the nose or mouth.
- By coughing or sneezing.

Contagious Period

From 1 to 2 days before the rash begins until all blisters have become scabs. Scabs usually form within 6 days.

Call your Healthcare Provider

If someone in your home:

- ♦ develops a rash with fever. Your doctor will decide if treatment is needed. **DO NOT go to a healthcare facility without calling first.** You will be separated from others to prevent spread of illness.
- ♦ has been exposed to chickenpox and they have not had chickenpox disease or chickenpox (varicella) vaccine in the past or are pregnant.

Prevention

- In Missouri, all children 12 months and older attending childcare or school must be vaccinated with varicella vaccine, have a history of disease, or have an exemption.
- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose and mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Clean and disinfect any objects or surfaces that come in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. Use a product that kills viruses.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.

Your child may have been exposed to:

Influenza (Flu)

Influenza (also known as flu) is a common viral respiratory infection.

Influenza is not "stomach flu", a term used by some to describe illnesses causing vomiting or diarrhea.

If you think your child has the Flu:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare and School:

Yes, until the fever is gone for at least 24 hours and the child is healthy enough for routine activities.

DO NOT give aspirin or salicylate-containing medicines to anyone under 18 years of age.

Symptoms

Your child may have chills, body aches, fever, and headache. Your child may also have a cough, runny or stuffy nose, and sore throat.

Illness may last up to 7 days.

If your child has been infected, it may take 1 to 4 days (usually 2 days) for symptoms to start.

Spread

- By coughing and sneezing.
- By touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces.

Contagious Period

During the 24 hours before and up to 7 days after the illness begins.

Call your Healthcare Provider

- ♦ If anyone in your home has a high fever and/or coughs a lot. Your doctor may give medications.

Antibiotics do not work for illnesses caused by a virus, including influenza.

Prevention

- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- DO NOT share anything that goes into the mouth, such as drinking cups, straws, and water bottles.
- Clean and disinfect anything that comes in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. This includes door knobs, refrigerator handle, water faucets, and cupboard handles. Use a product that kills viruses.
- Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for children 6 months to 18 years of age. Ask your healthcare provider about vaccine.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.

Your child may have been exposed to:

Pertussis

Pertussis (whooping cough) can be a serious bacterial illness especially in young, unvaccinated children.

If you think your child has Pertussis:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare and School:

Yes, until 5 days after your child starts taking antibiotics.

If staff or children are not treated, they need to stay home until 21 days after cough starts.

Symptoms

Your child may first have a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly fever.

After 1 or 2 weeks, your child may cough in explosive bursts. These coughing attacks can end in vomiting and/or in a high-pitched whoop. Coughing attacks occur most often at night. This may last up to three months.

If your child has been infected, it may take 5 to 21 days (usually 7 to 10 days) for symptoms to start.

Spread

- By coughing or sneezing.

Contagious Period

From the time of the first cold-like symptoms until 21 days after coughing begin. Antibiotics shorten the time a child with pertussis can give it to others.

Call your Healthcare Provider

If someone in your home has:

- ♦ had a cough 7 or more days. Laboratory tests may be done. Antibiotics will reduce the contagious period, but may do little to relieve your child's cough.
- ♦ been exposed to pertussis. Also, if public health has recommended that antibiotics are needed because of an exposure.

Prevention

- Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- All children 2 months of age or older enrolled in childcare or school must be vaccinated against pertussis or have an exemption. Age appropriate pertussis vaccine should be administered in the absence of documented laboratory confirmed disease.
- **There is also a pertussis vaccine for adolescents and adults**, and is recommended for persons having close contact with children under one year of age.
- Parents should keep infants away from individuals with cough illness.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.

Your child may have been exposed to:

Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungal infection. It is not a worm. The scalp infection is most common in children. Infection of the feet is more common in adolescents and adults.

If you think your child has Ringworm:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare and School:

Yes, until treatment has been started or if lesion cannot be completely covered. If on the scalp, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

Activities: Limit gym, swimming, and other close contact activities if the lesion cannot be covered or until after treatment has begun.

Sports: Athletes follow your healthcare provider's recommendations and the specific sports league rules.

Symptoms

Body - Flat, spreading, round shapes on the skin. If your child is infected, it may take 4 to 10 days for symptoms to start.

Scalp - Begins as a small scaly patch on the scalp and may cover more of the head. Mild redness, swelling, itching, and pustules (pus-filled bumps) may occur. Infected hairs become brittle and break off easily. If your child is infected, it may take 10 to 14 days for symptoms to start.

Feet (athlete's foot) - Scaling or cracking of the skin or blisters. Itching is common.

Spread

- By touching the infected skin of a person or pet (usually, dogs and cats).
- By sharing or touching contaminated objects. Objects

Contagious Period

As long as you can see the ringworm on your child's skin. Once treatment has begun your child is less contagious.

Call your Healthcare Provider

- ♦ If anyone in your home has symptoms. Your doctor will decide if treatment is needed. It is important to follow your doctor's treatment directions exactly.
- ♦ If you think a pet has ringworm, call a veterinarian.

Prevention

- Wash hands after touching infected skin on humans and pets. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Cover skin lesions.
- Wash bedding, clothing, combs and brushes in hot, soapy water.
- Check all household members and all pets for signs of infection.
- DO NOT let children touch an infected pet's skin until it has been treated and heals.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.

Your child may have been exposed to:

Scabies

Scabies is caused by tiny mites that live under the skin. Check your child for a rash.

If you think your child has Scabies:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

Childcare and School:

Yes, until after treatment has been completed.

Symptoms

Your child may itch the most at night. Look for a rash of pink bumps or tiny blisters. Sometimes, you can only see scratch marks. Common locations for the rash and itching are between fingers, around wrists and elbows, and armpits. Infants and young children may be infested on head, neck, palms, and bottoms of feet.

People without previous exposure may develop symptoms in 2 to 6 weeks. People who were previously infested are sensitized and may develop symptoms in 1 to 4 days.

Spread

- By having repeated direct contact with the skin of a person with scabies.
- By sharing bedding, towels, or clothing that was used by a person with scabies.

The mites cannot live off the human body for more than 3 days. They cannot reproduce off the body or on pets.

Contagious Period

From when a child gets the mites until 24 hours after treatment begins. A child is contagious before the rash.

Call your Healthcare Provider

- ♦ If anyone in your home has symptoms. Your doctor may do a test and/or give a medication, usually a cream or lotion.
- ♦ Even with treatment, it often takes 2 to 3 weeks for rash and itching to go away. Ask your doctor who in the household needs to be treated.

Prevention

- At time of treatment, wash items used in the past 48 hours in hot water and put them in a hot dryer. Examples of things to wash are underwear, pajamas, bedding, and towels. Items that cannot be washed should be sealed in a plastic bag for one week.
- Vacuum upholstered furniture and carpeting. DO NOT use insecticide sprays.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.

Your child may have been exposed to:

Strep Throat

Strep throat and a strep throat with a rash (scarlet fever) are common bacterial infections in children.

If you think your child has Strep Throat:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.

• Need to stay home?

Childcare and School:

Yes, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and the fever is gone.

Children who test positive for strep but do not show symptoms do not need to be excluded. They are unlikely to spread the infection to other people.

Symptoms

Strep throat - Your child may have a fever that starts suddenly, red sore throat, and swollen glands. Headache may occur. Children may have stomach pain and vomiting.

Scarlet fever - Rarely, a very fine raised rash appears at the same time as the throat soreness. The rash feels like sandpaper. The rash is most often on the neck, chest, elbow, and groin and in the inner thigh and folds of the armpit. Later on, the skin on the fingertips and toes may peel.

If your child is infected, it may take 2 to 5 days for symptoms to start.

Spread

- By coughing or sneezing.

Contagious Period

Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

Call your Healthcare Provider

- ♦ If anyone in your home has symptoms. A doctor may do a lab test and give antibiotics.

Prevention

- Cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Never share drink containers and cups or silverware. Wash all dishes with hot soapy water between uses.
- Clean and disinfect any objects that come in contact with the nose or mouth (especially mouthed toys). Use a product that kills bacteria.

For more information, call Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) at 573-751-6113 or 866-628-9891 (8-5 Monday thru Friday) or call your local health department.