

RED EYES, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS ALSO DRAINAGE OR CRUSTING AROUND THE EYE -this can often mean your child has conjunctivitis, also known as pink-eye. Not all pink-eye is contagious. Sometimes it is just allergies or other irritations that are causing the red color, but until we know for sure, which means we must have a note from the doctor stating the condition is not contagious, or until the drainage is completely gone, your child must remain out of school.

Acute Gastroenteritis

Acute gastroenteritis is characterized by vomiting usually followed by frequent, loose, watery stools and abdominal cramping. It is sometimes accompanied by a fever and symptoms last two to five days. The incubation period is 24 to 72 hours. The period of communicability is during the acute stage and for a short time thereafter while the infectious agent is being excreted.

The protocol for responding to cases of acute gastroenteritis is as follows:

If a student shows any signs or symptoms of vomiting (two or more times), diarrhea (two or more loose stools requiring frequent trips to the bathroom), the child should be excluded from school in order to prevent the spread of disease to other students.

When the child is symptom free for 24 hours and has resumed a normal diet without recurrence of symptoms, he/she may return to school.

References for information on this topic include the following: School Health: Policy and Practice, American Academy of Pediatrics (2004), pp. 235-236. State of Delaware, Department of Education, School Nursing: Technical Assistance Manual (Feb 2006), Section C, pp. 37-38.

Fever

Normal body temperatures typically range from 97.6 to 99.6 degrees orally; however, temperatures can fluctuate during the day or with specific activities. Most references agree that an oral temperature greater than 100 degrees is a low-grade fever. Fevers are a symptom and the underlying cause of the fever should be determined. Most often, fevers are caused by infections.

The protocol for responding to cases of fever is as follows:

Any child with a temperature greater than 100 degrees will be excluded from school.

Any child who is excluded from school due to fever should have a temperature within the normal range (less than 100 degrees) for 24 hours without taking Tylenol (Acetaminophen) or Advil (Ibuprofen) prior to returning to school.

References for information on this topic include the following: KidsHealth.org, Larissa Hirsch, MD, Aug 2009. State of Delaware, Department of Education, School Nursing: Technical Assistance Manual (Feb 2006), Section C, p. 43.