

## **Winthrop Public Schools**

### **School Health Protocols 2023-24**

Keeping our schools healthy and safe is a community effort. Please help our school communities remain as healthy as possible by following these recommendations if not feeling well. Practice proper hygiene (handwashing, cough etiquette, and cleaning of surfaces). Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about symptoms or if symptoms persist.

Keep your child home from school if they display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more, and until the child has had a normal temperature for 24 hours; **without** the use of Tylenol or Advil
- Vomiting or diarrhea during the night or in the morning before school
- Rash of unknown cause
- Signs of infection of the eyes, ears, nose, throat, skin or scalp. For example conjunctivitis or pink eye, open sores in the mouth, untreated strep throat, impetigo or open weeping wounds
- If on antibiotics for less than 12 hours for infectious conditions such as strep throat or conjunctivitis or impetigo

As of 3/25/24, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has aligned with the updated CDC guidance [updated recommendations for respiratory viruses](#), including COVID-19. This new guidance is for respiratory viruses like [Influenza](#), [RSV](#), and [Covid-19](#) as they share similar transmission methods, symptoms, and prevention strategies.

The new CDC guidance for respiratory virus:

- When you have ANY respiratory virus - stay home and away from others
- Return to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, both are true:
  - Your symptoms are getting better overall, and
  - You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication)
- When you go back to your normal activities, take added precautions over the next 5 days, such as taking additional steps for [cleaner air](#), [hygiene](#), [masks](#), [physical distancing](#), and/or [testing](#) when you will be around other people indoors.

# Winthrop Public Schools

## School Health Protocols 2023-24

### When ill and wondering if you should stay home or not

**Fever** (>100.0° Fahrenheit or higher):

- **Remain home until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.**

**Respiratory Viruses** ( [Influenza](#), [RSV](#), [Covid-19](#)) - Respiratory virus symptoms may include runny nose, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, fever, malaise, and headache among others. If symptoms are associated with a fever or they do not readily improve, please consult your healthcare provider. Sometimes symptoms can be serious, especially for immunocompromised individuals, infants and older adults.

- **Remain home for at least 24 hours and until both are true:**
  - **Your symptoms are getting better (and you will have the stamina to make it through the school day)**
  - **You have been fever-free for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications)**

When going back to normal activities, **take added precautions over the next 5 days**, such as taking additional strategies to decrease the spread of illness including practicing good [hygiene](#), [physical distancing](#), taking [steps for cleaner air](#), wearing [masks](#) if needed, and/or [testing](#) when you will be around other people indoors.

- Keep in mind that you may still be able to spread the virus that made you sick, even if you are feeling better. You are likely to be less contagious at this time, depending on factors like how long you were sick or how sick you were.
- If you develop a fever or you start to feel worse after you have gone back to normal activities, stay home and away from others again until, for at least 24 hours, both are true: your symptoms are improving overall, and you have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication) for at least 24h. Then take added precaution for the next 5 days.

### **Persistent cough, difficulty breathing, wheezing, shortness of breath**

- If not associated with a pre-existing condition consult your healthcare provider
  - **Remain home until evaluated by a healthcare provider and the individual has the stamina to make it through the school day.**
- If associated with a pre-existing condition
  - **Remain home until the individual has the stamina to make it through the school day.**

**Sore throat** - A sore throat in addition to a fever, headache or stomach ache may indicate [strep throat](#).

- If diagnosed with strep throat, remain home until both are true:
  - a minimum of 12 hours after antibiotics have started
  - fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

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**Hand, foot and mouth (Coxsackie virus)**- usually begins with mild fever, poor appetite, malaise, and sore throat. One or two days after the fever begins, sores develop in the mouth, usually on the tongue, gums, and inside of the cheeks. A skin rash, usually located on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, with flat or raised red spots and sometimes blisters, develops over 1–2 days. Individuals may attend school with the rash; there is no need to exclude anyone who is feeling well enough to attend school.

- **Remain home until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications and the individual has the stamina to make it through the school day.**

**Conjunctivitis (pink eye)** – Some signs and symptoms of conjunctivitis are when the white part of the eye is red; eyes are itchy and produce a yellow or green crusty discharge. If suspected, contact your physician. If conjunctivitis is suspected while your child is at school, you may be asked to pick up your child to decrease the potential spread.

- **Remain home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment starts or when cleared by a healthcare provider (if no antibiotic treatment is needed).**

**Rash** – A rash is usually a symptom of an underlying condition or disorder; a rash can be caused by a viral illness or an exposure to an irritant.

- **Remain home for any unusual rashes or a rash associated with a fever and contact your healthcare provider.**

**Vomiting and Diarrhea** – There are many causes for vomiting and diarrhea, viruses being one. Take extra care with handwashing on return to school, especially after using the bathroom.

- **Remain home until symptom-free for 12 to 24 hours and at least two regular meals have been consumed without symptoms returning.**