

San Francisco Waldorf School

Health and Illness Guide

Commit to Be Well

This pamphlet is intended to provide you with information about Health and Illness Guidelines at San Francisco Waldorf High School. This information is based on State and County Health Department guidelines and school policy. Please read this pamphlet and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your student's health.

The pages that follow will give you an overview of the basics for making those challenging judgment calls of when to send your student to school and when to keep them home. We also have some information about California State law regarding vaccinations which changed dramatically with the passage of State Bill 277.

By keeping lines of communication open, we can make progress in boosting the health of our students, teachers and staff. Please work within the guidelines we have outlined and join us in our commitment to maintaining wellness at the school.

Remember to make sure that the school office knows how to reach you during the day and that there is a backup plan and phone number on file if we cannot reach you.

Keeping Your Student Home

Early in the morning it is often difficult to make a decision about whether or not your student is sick enough to stay at home from school.

As a rule, students should be kept at home if symptoms will interfere with any school activities. It is a courtesy to keep students with contagious conditions home whenever possible. Students with academic concerns should be in touch with faculty about missing work. The **Symptom Guidelines** section can be of help when trying to determine if your student needs to stay at home or see a health practitioner.

Please notify the office about any symptoms your student has when home from school due to illness. We keep a confidential log to track contagions and help raise awareness of “bugs” that may be “going around.”

Sick at School

Please keep your daytime phone numbers on the emergency form current in order to avoid delays in reaching you in the event of illness or accident at school.

We call parents if a student becomes sick during the day and needs to leave school. **There is limited space at school for sick students to rest comfortably, and if students are not well enough to be in class, they are not well enough to be at school.** Parents need to make arrangements for their student to be picked up by a responsible adult or give verbal permission for them to leave campus.

Please note that the school cannot give any medication, including ibuprofen and the like, without written parental approval. For students who need specific medications during the school day, the medicine should be provided in the original container with clear instructions.

Symptoms Guidelines

1. **Runny nose:** Nasal discharge is the way many students respond to pollen, dust or a cold virus. Minor cold or allergy symptoms should not be a reason to miss school. Many healthy students have as many as six colds per year. A student should stay home if nasal mucous from a runny nose is not clear (yellowish or otherwise) and too uncomfortable to complete class work or participate in other school activities.
2. **Coughing:** Keep your student home when a cough is persistent during the day as this can indicate a worsening of cold or allergy symptoms. It may be a sign of a secondary infection (sinusitis, pneumonia), which may require medical treatment. If your student's cough is worse than you might expect with a common cold, you need to consult their doctor. You should do so immediately if they are not acting normal or has any difficulty breathing.
3. **Diarrhea and vomiting:** It could be very uncomfortable for your student to have an episode while in school. A student should be symptom-free for 24 hours and able to hold down food and fluids before returning to school.
4. **Fever: (100°F or higher):** **Fever is an important symptom** especially when it occurs along with a sore throat, nausea, or a rash. Your student is likely to have a contagious illness. While you can treat their fever, and usually make them feel better temporarily, the cause of the fever is still there. **Students with a fever should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours (without taking Tylenol, Advil, etc.)**
5. **Sore throat:** Consult your student's physician for advice regarding diagnosis and treatment. A student should stay home if the sore throat is bad enough to prevent them from talking or sipping liquid comfortably. If diagnosed with a strep throat, a student may **NOT return to school until 24-48 hours after the first dose of antibiotics** was given and s/he is fever-free.
6. **Pinkeye, or conjunctivitis:** Pinkeye can be caused by a virus, bacteria or allergy. The first two are very contagious. The eye will be reddened and a cloudy or yellow discharge is usually present. The eye may be sensitive to light. Consult with your student's doctor to see if antibiotic eye drops are needed. Again, the student should stay home until symptoms subside and s/he has been on antibiotic eye drops at least 48 hours or until the doctor recommends the student return to school.
7. **Middle ear infections:** Ear infections by themselves can cause great discomfort and often fever, but are not contagious to others. The student should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment and should stay at home if s/he has fever or pain.
8. **Flu:** Flu is a contagious virus that usually occurs in the winter months. Symptoms include body aches, high fever, chills, congestion, sore throat, and, in some students, vomiting. Your child should stay home until these symptoms improve, usually five to seven days. Consult your child's doctor for treatment suggestions to make your student more comfortable.
9. **Skin infection** can be a staph or strep infection that creates a red, oozing blister-like area that can appear anywhere on the body. It can be passed to others by direct contact. Consult the doctor for treatment and length of time your student should remain out of school, especially if the area cannot be covered.

Special Cases

You must keep your student home and notify the school if your student contracts any of the following infectious diseases:

Chicken Pox	Meningitis
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Mumps
Diphtheria	Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
Fifth Disease (Slapped Cheek Fever)	Poliomyelitis (Polio)
Giardia	Ring Worm
German Measles	Roseola
Hepatitis	Scabies
Hepatitis A	Scarlet Fever
Impetigo	Strep Throat
Measles/Rubella	Typhoid Fever

Childhood Vaccinations

As of January 2016, the State of California Senate Bill 277 changed California law to require that all students enrolled in a California school, whether private or public, must be fully vaccinated according to the Californian code of Health. Temporary or permanent Medical Exemptions for one or all vaccinations may be granted, but requires a signed document from a California licensed physician.

- Only students who have met all immunization requirements (or have a signed Medical Exemption from a California licensed physician) will be admitted to school. These requirements must be met **before the first day of school**. Please visit www.shotsforschool.org/k-12 for details regarding California requirements. The school will cooperate with the San Francisco Public Health Department to help control the spread of any infectious illness at the school and to ensure we are in compliance with State Health codes.
- Pre-existing California Personal Belief Exemptions are valid until the student enters the next “grade span” as defined by state law. For our purposes grades spans are entry into Nursery, Kindergarten and Grade 7. Students entering the school from out of state will need to meet all vaccination requirements (unless they submit a Medical Exemption from a California licensed physician).