Deciding when to keep a sick child out of child care can be difficult. The following questions can help guide your decision:

- Will the child be able to comfortably participate in the program’s normal activities?
- Will the child’s illness require more attention than the staff can give?
- Will the sick child affect the health and safety of other children?

Remember that if sick children are kept at home, everyone will stay healthier.
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<th>COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES</th>
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<td>CONJUNCTIVITIS (pink eye)</td>
<td>Itchy eyes, painful eyes, or eyelid redness</td>
<td>Viruses, bacteria, blocked tear ducts. Watery conjunctivitis is common with allergies or the common cold.</td>
<td>Exclude if child is too uncomfortable to participate, or child feels general discomfort or seems unwell. Exclude if child has fever, looks or acts very ill, there is drainage from eye, or pain lasts more than 3 days.</td>
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<td>OTITIS MEDIA (inside ear infection)</td>
<td>Earache, slightly above normal or high temperature, or draining from the ear. Infant may indicate pain by rolling his head, pulling his ear, or becoming irritable</td>
<td>Bacteria, viruses</td>
<td>Exclude if child has fever, looks or acts very ill, there is drainage from ear, or pain lasts more than 3 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMON COLD</td>
<td>Rummy or stuffy nose, sneezing, watery eyes, sore throat, cough, muscle aches, headaches, vomiting, or diarrhea</td>
<td>Viruses</td>
<td>Exclude if child has fever, looks or acts very ill, there is drainage from eye, or pain lasts more than 3 days.</td>
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<td>STREPTOCOCCAL PHARYNGITIS (strep throat)</td>
<td>Severe sore throat, fever, enlarged lymph nodes, or rash</td>
<td>Streptococcus bacteria, spread through direct contact with saliva or by sneezing or coughing</td>
<td>Exclude until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and fever has passed.</td>
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<td>COUGH</td>
<td>Vireal infections, spread through airborne particles and direct contact, or may be caused by allergies that are not contagious</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exclude if child is too ill to participate or has fever.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIARRHEA</td>
<td>Excess of liquid in stools, five or more stools in an 8-hour period or an increased number of stools compared to the child’s normal pattern</td>
<td>Viruses, bacteria or parasites, food intolerance, medications, diseases of the bowel. Contagious types spread by direct contact, especially with feces. Wash hands thoroughly after diapering or toileting!</td>
<td>Exclude if stools are bloody or black, there is abdominal pain, no urine output for 8 hours, fever, vomiting or stools, child appears ill, eyes or skin appear yellow, or stools are not contained in diaper or toilet. Child may need stool culture to determine cause. Beware of dehydrations (no urination, dry mouth, no tears, skin loses elasticity).</td>
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<td>PINWORM</td>
<td>Local irritation and itching in anal area, small, white worms in anal area</td>
<td>Parasites, the child scrathes area, contaminates his fingers, and reinfects himself and others</td>
<td>Exclude until treated.</td>
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<td>INFECTIGO</td>
<td>Red, cracking, oozing, blister-like pimples; circular scaling rash (often on face, but may be anywhere)</td>
<td>Bacteria, spread by contact with infected people or contaminated surfaces</td>
<td>Exclude until 24 hours after treatment has begun.</td>
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<td>RINGWORM</td>
<td>On skin: red or dark scaling circular patches with raised edges and central clearing; on scalp: red, scaling of scalp with broken hairs or patches of hair loss</td>
<td>Fungus infection, spread by contact with infected person, animals, or contaminated surfaces</td>
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<td>LICE</td>
<td>Itching, small sores at base of hair, visible lice (very small insect) on scalp or hair, visible nits (eggs) on the hair shaft near scalp</td>
<td>Head louse, spread by direct contact with infected person or by sharing infected person’s combs, brushes, clothing, or bedding</td>
<td>Exclude until treated. May need second treatment. Through removal of lice is important to determine successful treatment.</td>
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<td>SCABIES</td>
<td>Intense itching, red bumps or blisters, often in a line and often between fingers and toes</td>
<td>Mites, spread by direct contact with infected person or with infected person’s clothing or bedding</td>
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<td>CHICKEN POX</td>
<td>Fever, chills, headache, rash starting on torso and spreading outward, that develops blisters with the appearance of dew drops</td>
<td>Virus, spread by direct contact with infected person or by airborne droplets, especially 2 days before rash appears until pox have dried</td>
<td>Exclude if blister have dried and no new ones have appeared within 48 hours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROSEOLA</td>
<td>Usually occurs in children under 24 months; fever for 3 or 4 days, followed by rash for 1 to 2 days</td>
<td>Human herpes virus 6, spread through contact with infected secretions</td>
<td>Exclude if fever has passed and rash has subsided.</td>
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<td>MENINGITIS</td>
<td>Severe headache, high fever, poor feeding, vomiting, delirium, stiff neck and back, coma</td>
<td>Viruses and bacteria, spread by contact with infected person, animal, insect, or with contaminated surfaces</td>
<td>Exclude if physician or health department indicates child may return.</td>
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**COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES**
- Roseola
- Chickenpox
- Scabies
- Head lice
- Ringworm
- Pinworm
- Impetigo
- Chickenpox
- Scabies
- Infected skin patches

**POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS**
- Fever, chills, headache, rash starting on torso and spreading outward, that develops blisters with the appearance of dew drops
- Severe headache, high fever, poor feeding, vomiting, delirium, stiff neck and back, coma
- Unusual behavior — Child is cranky; child feels general discomfort or seems unwell; child cries more than usual
- Child does not feel well enough to participate in the normal activities of the program
- Loss of appetite
- Child feels general discomfort or seems unwell
- Unusual behavior — Child is cranky; child feels general discomfort or seems unwell
- Erythema infectiosum
- Unusual behavior — Child is cranky; child feels general discomfort or seems unwell

**CAUSES**
- Virus
- Bacteria
- Parasites
- Virus
- Bacteria
- Fungus
- Head louse
- Mites
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**ACTION**
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### POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS of the common childhood illnesses listed above:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Watery eyes
- Sore throat
- Stomach ache
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Shaking chills
- Loss of appetite
- Unusual behavior
- Vomiting
- Unusual spots, rashes, or bruises
- delirium
- Stiff neck
- Coma

### POSSIBLE CAUSES of the common childhood illnesses listed above:

- Viruses
- Bacteria
- Parasites
- Food intolerance
- Medications
- Diseases of the bowel
- Allergies

### ACTION to take when a symptom is present:

- Exclude child from day care if symptoms are present.
- Consult a physician if child’s symptoms persist or worsen.
- Child care providers are encouraged to follow their individual program’s exclusion policy. It is helpful if parents are familiar with their employer’s policy on time child care options on those unexpected days.

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