

Most common (childhood) illnesses

Please find below some brief information regarding the most common (childhood) illnesses: what the illness is and whether your child may attend the daycare centre.

Vomiting

Children can vomit for a number of reasons. Conditions such as the flu, food poisoning and stress may be related to vomiting.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

If a child is vomiting and feeling really ill, he or she should stay at home. If a child has managed to keep a complete meal down, he or she is welcome.

Diarrhoea

There are different possible causes for diarrhoea. It is often caused by an intestinal infection or by various types of micro-organisms. Diarrhoea is generally a harmless condition which disappears by itself within a few days.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

If a child has diarrhoea twice at the daycare centre, the parents will be phoned and asked to pick up their child. The required extra attention and care cannot be provided at the daycare centre. A child with bloody diarrhoea must immediately be examined by a doctor.

Hand foot and mouth disease

The hand foot and mouth disease is caused by a virus. The symptoms consist of a combination of skin rash and blisters in the mouth, preceded by nausea, vomiting, sometimes diarrhoea and a low-grade fever. This is followed by red marks which eventually turn into blisters. The symptoms usually disappear within a week, but small scars may remain. The incubation period is three to five days.

This disease can lead to serious complications in newborns up to ten days of age.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes, he or she may, since this is not a serious disease.

Head lice

Head lice cause itching and they can often be found behind the ears and in the neck, generally very close to the scalp. Head lice are small, grey animals 2 to 3 mm long. The eggs (nits) are a yellowish white and they hatch within ten days.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes, but you must begin treatment immediately. Parents will be informed if head lice are found on their child's head, so that they can be extra alert.

Whooping cough

Whooping cough is from its earliest stages a contagious disease of the respiratory tract, caused by bacteria. This disease is contagious up to four weeks after the onset of the characteristic heavy and sudden coughing fits, accompanied by a whooping sound and mucus. These exhausting coughing attacks can continue to occur for up to three to four months.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. Once a child has been diagnosed, the contagious period is usually over. Newborns are a higher-risk group because their immunity is lower and they have not yet been fully vaccinated.

Cold sore

A cold sore involves small blisters forming around the mouth. The fluid in the blisters is highly contagious. The disease spreads through contact with the blisters. A cold sore is no longer contagious once a scab has formed over the blister. Cold sores are caused by the Herpes Simplex virus. People carry this virus in their system for their whole life, which can lead to recurring symptoms, particularly at times when the immune system is weakened, or following sun exposure. In newborns younger than four weeks, the condition can be very serious, and even cause encephalitis.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. Exclusion is unnecessary because many people already carry the virus and they can easily become contagious again. For this reason, it is difficult to prevent this viral infection in childhood.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a skin infection caused by bacteria. Sometimes, the infection appears in places that have been previously scratched open, for instance as a result of eczema or mosquito bites. Blisters appear which later break open and are covered with a honey-coloured scab. The infection mostly appears on the face, around the nose or mouth, but it can also appear elsewhere.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Exclusion is required for up to 48 hours after the start of the antibiotics treatment, unless your child cannot infect other children, because he or she is not yet free to walk around, or because the impetigo appears in a place that is covered. The daycare centre is required to inform the GGD (Community Health Services) of all cases of rash-causing diseases.

Middle ear infection/Runny ear

A middle ear infection is an infection of the middle ear that occurs suddenly and that is caused by the same viruses and bacteria that also cause colds and respiratory tract infections. A runny ear is a complication resulting from a rupture of the eardrum and pus coming out of the ear.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Exclusion is not required if your child feels otherwise well.

Eye infections

Eye infections are caused by a viral or bacterial infection. In most cases, the symptoms disappear after a few days (virus). If the eye infection is bacterial, it sometimes has to be treated with antibiotics in the form of eye-drops. After two days of treatment, there is no more danger of contagion. In some cases, parents will be required to ask their family doctor for advice.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. The infection is usually the result of a common cold, and not a serious condition. In case of a bacterial infection, the doctor's advice may be required.

Croup

Croup is an illness involving severe tightness of the chest as a result of a narrowing of the upper respiratory tract. Only children with a predisposition for it can develop this narrowing as a result of a viral infection. The symptoms of croup include the following: cold, barking cough, hoarse voice, sometimes a fever, and an increasing tightness of the chest (mostly at night) with wheezing when breathing in.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. Croup only occurs in children with a predisposition for it. There are no epidemics of croup.

German measles (Rubella)

German measles is an infectious disease caused by a virus. Since most children are vaccinated against it, this infection is nowadays rare.

The symptoms of German measles include the following: a red rash on the face which quickly spreads over the rest of the body, and swollen glands in the neck and throat; the child is hardly ill at all, at most he or she has a cold and a low-grade fever. German measles are contagious from five days before until five days after the rash appears. In pregnant women who have not had German measles and who have not been vaccinated against it, the condition can cause serious developmental anomalies in their unborn child. This risk is highest in the first months of the pregnancy.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. However, in a confirmed case of German measles, pregnant mothers and staff members must be warned. The daycare centre is required to report German measles to the GGD.

Scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is an infection caused by bacteria. This disease is easy to treat with antibiotics. Other children are safe from contagion 48 hours after starting the treatment. Symptoms: high fever, sore throat, headache, small pointy red spots, a tongue completely covered in a rash, and a skin rash which begins to disappear after ten days, following which the skin starts to peel.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Children who have been diagnosed with scarlet fever may begin attending the daycare centre 24 hours after the start of the antibiotics treatment. After 24 hours of antibiotics treatment, other children are free of the risk of contagion. The daycare centre is required to report scarlet fever to the GGD.

RSV

RSV is a virus which causes an inflammation of the respiratory tract and mostly occurs in the winter months. It can lead to a mild cold but also to a heavy case of pneumonia. The disease can be very serious in very young children, and they might sometimes have to be hospitalised. The symptoms include a runny nose, a cough sometimes accompanied by vomiting, tightness of the chest and constricted breathing and a fever. The incubation period is 3 to 5 days.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. There is no need to exclude children who have been hospitalised as a result of an RSV infection. Contact with the virus is unavoidable. It is sensible to warn parents of children with a serious congenital lung disorder and parents of children born more than six weeks prematurely.

Ringworm

Ringworm is a harmless skin infection caused by a fungus. The skin rash begins with red spots, which then turn into blisters. The skin on these spots then starts flaking. The fungal infection can occur anywhere on the body. Fungal infections are contagious. Treatment must begin at once. Once the treatment has started, the risk of infection drops quickly.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. The condition is easy to treat and not serious.

Thrush

Thrush is a yeast infection of the mouth and tongue in which white spots appear that cannot be brushed away. If a baby suffers from thrush, he or she will tend to drink often and with difficulty. You are advised to contact your family doctor.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes.

Lyme disease

Lyme disease is an infection caused by a bacteria carried by ticks. If diagnosed early enough, the disease can easily be treated with antibiotics. Removing the tick within 24 hours reduces the chances of contracting Lyme disease.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. This disease cannot spread from one person to another.

Cold

A cold is an infection of the upper respiratory tract caused by a virus. A number of viruses can be responsible for a cold.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes, a cold is a harmless, unavoidable condition.

Fifth disease

The fifth disease is a contagious infection disease caused by a virus. The symptoms are large and smaller red spots, which begin on the face and spread over the entire body. A low-grade fever also accompanies this harmless disease which nevertheless carries risks for pregnant women who have not contracted it in the past.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. Once a child has been diagnosed with the fifth disease, he or she is no longer contagious. The daycare centre is required to report all cases of rash-causing diseases to the GGD.

Chicken pox

Chicken pox is a contagious infectious disease, caused by a virus.

The disease lasts approximately seven days and disappears by itself. Symptoms of chicken pox include the following: small red pockmarks, on which very itchy blisters appear within six to twelve hours. These blisters either burst open or dry out. The pockmarks appear mostly on the torso, face, on the scalp and in the mouth.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. Once the blisters appear, the disease is no longer contagious.

Worms

Threadworms are small white worms of 1 cm that live in the intestines. These worms exit the body in the faeces and can then be observed with the naked eye. The infected child suffers from itching and/or vague abdominal pains and/or diarrhoea. You are advised to contact your family doctor for treatment.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Yes. The condition is easy to treat and not serious.

Sixth disease (three-day fever)

The sixth disease is a harmless contagious disease caused by a virus. The disease is contagious from the moment the fever appears until the spots disappear. This disease occurs in children aged 6 months to 3 years.

May my child attend the daycare centre?

Exclusion is not necessary if your child feels otherwise well. The daycare centre is required to report all cases of rash-causing diseases to the GGD.

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