



# Common Childhood Illnesses

ISR Information Sheet/  
Protocol 06

## Childhood Illnesses Overview

The developing immune system of the preschool-aged child combined with frequent, close contact with large groups of other children make infectious illnesses by far the most common reason for missed lessons.

Bacterial and viral infections have many things in common. Both types of infections are caused by microbes; bacteria and viruses. They are spread by coughing, sneezing, contact with infected people or animals (such as fleas and ticks) or contaminated surfaces, food and water. Infections are typically mild, but can become severe in some cases.

Bacterial and viral infections can cause similar symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, fever, inflammation, rashes, vomiting, diarrhea and fatigue, all of which are ways the immune system tries to rid the body of infectious organisms. Bacterial and viral infections are dissimilar in many important respects, most of them due to the way they respond to medications. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses and many leading organizations now recommend against using antibiotics unless there is clear evidence of a bacterial infection. The best treatments for these illnesses are generally supportive and are focused on relieving the symptoms.

### COMMON VIRAL INFECTIONS

- Rhinovirus (Common Cold)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Fifths Disease (Parvovirus)
- Coxsackievirus (Hand, Foot & Mouth, Herpangina)
- Influenza
- Croup
- Intestinal infections such as Rotavirus, Adenovirus
- Molluscum Contagiosum (see ISP 20)
- Roseola

### COMMON BACTERIAL INFECTIONS

- Strep Throat
- Scarlet Fever
- Ear Infections (see ISP 11)
- Impetigo (see ISP 20)
- Pneumonia (can be viral)
- Conjunctivitis (AKA Pink Eye can be viral or bacterial, see ISP 35)

### OTHER INFECTIONS

- Cryptosporidium (parasite infection)

### Common Childhood Illnesses

ISR information and protocols for common infections that can affect children while attending ISR lessons.

### Frequency of Infections

It is common for young children to have between 4-6 illnesses per year. It is also common for children to get sick from one virus shortly after getting better from a different one, seeming to their parents to be sick all the time. As children get older, the frequency of catching viral illnesses usually reduces.



## ISR Protocols

Protocols will be based on the type and severity of the student's symptoms.

**FEVER** must be resolved for 48 hours without medication before returning to ISR lessons. For ISR purposes, a fever is an oral temperature of 100° F (37.8° C) or higher. See “fever parameters” chart below.

**DIARRHEA** must be resolved for 48 hours before returning to ISR lessons. Generally, infections that cause diarrhea are highly contagious. Most cases can be spread to others for as long as someone has diarrhea and some infections can be contagious even longer.

**VOMITING** must be resolved for 48 hours before returning to ISR lessons. Vomiting not only rids the body of undigested food and other stomach contents, but may severely impact fluid balance and core body temperature as well.

**RASHES** must be diagnosed and dried or scabbed over before returning to lessons. Many illnesses present with rashes or blisters on various parts of the body. Some rashes appear after the contagious period. Blisters remain contagious until crusted over and skin integrity has recovered. See ISP 20 Skin Rashes.

**RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS** that require medications for wheezing or severe coughing require a waiting period before returning to lessons. See ISP 38 Upper Respiratory Infections, or ISP 3 Asthma, for more information.



### MEDICAL LESSON UPDATES AND RET

**NOTIFICATION:** If 3 or more lessons are missed, a child visits a doctor, or new medications are prescribed, a Medical Lesson Update will be required before lessons can resume. The MLU should be completed once the child has met protocol criteria and is well enough to return to lessons.

## Instructor Directives

- Discuss BUDS information carefully. Activity and temperature protocols are required for students on antibiotic therapy. Assess for any medication side effects or signs of a relapse illness.
- Do a head to toe assessment for rashes or blisters.
- Monitor VC checks, skin color, respiratory rate, and level of alertness for temperature or physical fatigue.
- Multiple missed lessons may affect skill acquisition and retention. Stabilize skills early and adjust pace and length of lesson accordingly. Always decrease the pace for children recovering from an illness.

## Instructor Directives (continued)

- Strictly adhere to swim diaper rules to avoid accidental water contamination.
- Be alert to loss of skills. Lethargy, poor movement, loss of coordination, unstable float - all may signal a masked or ongoing illness.
- Monitor abdominal distention closely to avoid vomiting episodes. Be aware that congestion can lead to sips of water and air gulps at surface.
- Children with current or recent infections are required to monitor activity and temperature as long as they are taking antibiotics and should be watched closely for the remainder of the lessons for any signs of relapse.
- Additional information can be found in condition-specific Information Sheet/ Protocols.

### FEVER PARAMETERS FOR ISR LESSONS

**Lessons should be cancelled for the following temperatures (unmedicated):**

- Rectal, ear or temporal artery temperature of 100.4° (38° C) or higher
- Oral temperature of 100° F (37.8° C) or higher
- Armpit (axillary) temperature of 99° F (37.2° C) or higher

### WHY WAIT 48 HOURS?

Some physicians and many daycares may allow a child to return to normal daily activities and school after being on antibiotics for 24 hours because that time frame indicates the child is no longer contagious. However, this does not necessarily mean the child is fully healthy after 24 hours and it certainly does not mean the child feels healthy.

ISR lessons are challenging physically and emotionally and require an increase in physical exertion beyond normal daily activity. Due to the physical demand of lessons, we ask that students be symptom-free for a minimum of 48 hours and back to their normal activity and energy levels before returning to lessons. We do not want to tax the student's body during this recovery period or cause additional stress to the immune system. To participate in lessons, students should be fully healthy and up for the challenge of lessons.

## Parent Education

- Discuss and report any changes in BUDS information, temperature or activity levels.
- Notify your Instructor of any medication side effects, new, recurring or worsening symptoms, new rashes or blisters.
- Lessons may be shorter and proceed at a slower pace.
- Small frequent meals may help provide nutrition when appetite is decreased.
- Children may benefit from a break in lessons if case is severe or many lessons are missed.
- Plenty of fluids are important to maintain hydration.