

ELK VALLEY CHILDCARE SOCIETY

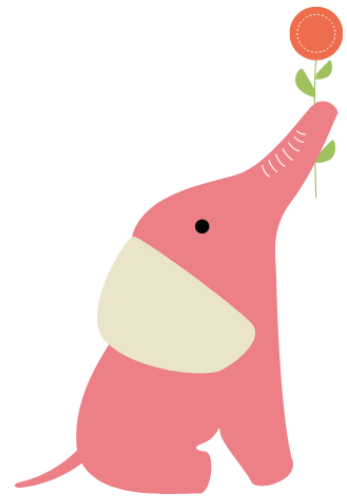


# Illness

## Policy and Procedures

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Created by  
**Elk Valley Childcare Society**



## Illness policy

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Children with certain illnesses and infections must stay at home to ensure they receive appropriate care. This will also help prevent the infection from spreading to other children and staff in the school.

Children must not attend childcare if they have:

- An illness that prevents them from taking part in all of the daily activities
- An illness that requires more care than Early Childhood Educators can provide without affecting the health and safety of other children and staff
- A very infectious disease, such as:
  - Food borne illnesses (all causes, ie; Salmonella)
  - Diphtheria
  - Giardiasis
  - Hepatitis A, B and C
  - German measles (Rubella)
  - Bacterial or viral meningitis
  - Hemolytic Uremic syndrome (the E Coli toxin of Hemorrhagic colitis or hamburger disease)
  - Meningococcal disease (Bacteraemia or Meningitis)
  - Chicken Pox
  - Whooping cough (Pertussis)
  - Impetigo
  - Scabies
  - Lice

**Please notify the childcare center immediately if your child develops any communicable disease, including any listed above.**

Your child may be sent home if an undiagnosed skin rash develops while at the childcare facility. The childcare will need a note from the Doctor to ensure clearance they are not contagious and that the child is well enough to be at the school.

In the case of a **communicable disease**, please have a physician's approval prior to returning to the childcare center. Your child may return to the childcare center with a note from the doctor specifying it is safe to return to its group, when the child is able to participate in all class activities.

If your child has been prescribed antibiotics, **they may not return to the facility until 24 hours have passed from the time they took the first dose and the symptoms have improved.** After that time the antibiotics can be administered by an Early Childhood Educator, as long as it is a doctor prescribed medication and the necessary forms have been completed and submitted to the childcare center. **Over the counter medicines will not be administered by any staff at** unless we have written permission from your doctor and the necessary forms have been completed and submitted to the childcare center. If your child requires medication, he/she may not be well enough to attend school.

Please plan ahead by making arrangements for alternative care for your child, as it is common for children to become ill and require care at home, especially younger children. Please ensure that your emergency contact information is up to date at the childcare center in case we need to contact you should your child become ill while at school.

We also require that you keep your **child at home until 24 hours** have passed from the last time he exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- fever (see guidelines below)
- cold, cough, or sore throat.

### **Fever**

Guidelines for normal temperature range:

Measurement method	Normal temperature range
Mouth	35.5°C to 37.5°C (95.9°F to 99.5°F)
Armpit	34.7°C to 37.3°C (94.5°F to 99.1°F)
Ear and Infrared Forehead	35.8°C to 38°C (96.4°F to 100.4°F)

The Early Childhood Educator will call you to pick up your child, if their temperature is higher than the normal temperature range in this chart, as it would be considered a fever.

### **Colds**

Young children get many colds, sometimes, as many as 8 to 10 each year before they are 2 years old. Colds tend to be more common in the Fall and Winter when children are indoors and in closer contact with each other, so it may seem like your child has cold after cold all Winter long. Young children have more colds than older children and adults because they have not built up immunity to the more than 100 different cold viruses that exist. Typically by the time they start primary school, children who have attended group activities will have fewer colds than other children.

#### **Is it just a cold or something more?**

- Typical cold symptoms can include a runny nose, nasal congestion, sneezing, coughing and a mild sore throat
- Colds can sometime cause a fever
- Colds last about a week, but can last as long as 2 weeks
- Some respiratory viruses that cause colds in older children and adults may cause more serious illness when they infect infants and toddlers. These illnesses include croup, bronchiolitis, sore eyes, sore throat and neck gland swelling.
- The influenza virus can cause high fever, cough and body aches, strikes more quickly than a cold and causes an infected person to be sicker.

### When to take your child to the doctor

- Although red eyes and watery discharge are common with a cold, pus is a sign of an eye infection, and should be treated by a doctor (please refer to Pink Eye below). The child will need to stay at home until after 24 hours of being on the prescribed antibiotic
- It is common to have thick or discolored (yellow, green) discharge from the nose with a cold. However, if it lasts for more than 10 to 14 days, contact your doctor

### Outside play with a cold

While we are sympathetic to children with colds, they can still play outside in the cold weather. The Early Childhood Educators can ensure that your child is part of the last group to go outside and the first group to come inside. This is also required in order to respect the Early Childhood Educator to children ratio, as an Early Childhood Educator would need to supervise your child in the class, and be away from the rest of the group playing outside.

### **Diarrhea**

A child has diarrhea when he has more than 2 bowel movements in a short period of time, and stools are less formed and more watery than usual. They may also have the added symptoms of fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pains, cramps and blood and/or mucus in bowel movement. The Early Childhood Educator will notify you after any of the symptoms above are noticed while at the childcare center; your child must be picked up and remain at home for **at least 48 hours** after their last loose bowel movement, and cessation of all other symptoms before returning to the childcare facility.

### **Sickness and Vomiting**

When your child has vomited more than once while attending the childcare center, an Early Childhood Educator will notify you and your child will have to be picked up. Your child must then stay home **at least 48 hours** after the last occurrence of vomiting.

### **Ear Infections**

A middle ear infection often occurs after another illness, such as a cold. Along with the usual symptoms of a cold, including fever, sore throat, lack of energy and loss of appetite, children with ear infections may:

- Have an ear ache
- Be irritable (fussy)
- Have trouble sleeping
- Tug or pull both ears; and
- Have lack of response to soft sounds.

Other symptoms, though less common, are:

- Fluid draining from their ears;
- Loss of balance.

If given antibiotics for an ear infection, your child may attend the childcare center when 24 hours have passed from the first dose of antibiotics, if he does not have a fever, and is able to take part in all group activities.

### **Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)**

Children with pinkeye complain of a scratchy feeling or pain in their eyes and may have a lot of watery or pus discharge. The infection turns the white of the eyes pink or red. When the child wakes up after a sleep, pus or discharge often makes the eyelid stick together. If an Early Childhood Educator notices these symptoms, you will be asked to pick up your child to consult a doctor for diagnosis. If given antibiotics, your child must remain at home 24 hours after the start of treatment before returning to the childcare center, as this is a highly infectious illness.

### **Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease**

This is not a severe disease, it may cause:

- ☐ Fever
- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Sore throat
- ☐ Lack of energy
- ☐ Small, painful ulcers in the mouth
- ☐ Skin rash

The skin rash consists of red spots, often topped by small blisters. It usually appears on the hands and feet but can appear on other parts of the body as well. The Early Childhood Educator will notify you when they notice these symptoms. You will be required to pick up your child and see a doctor for diagnosis. You must have a doctor's note allowing the child to return to the childcare center, when the child is able to participate in all group activities.

### **Impetigo**

Impetigo is a skin infection caused by Streptococcus (strep) and Staphylococcus (Staph) bacteria. A child will have a skin rash characterized by a cluster of blisters or red bumps. The blisters may ooze or be covered with a honey-coloured crust. The rash usually appears around the nose, mouth and parts of the skin not covered by clothes. When the Early Childhood Educator discovers a rash of this description, they will notify you and you will be required to pick up your child and consult a doctor. To return to the childcare center, we require a doctor's note specifying that it is safe for the child to join its group, and if diagnosed with Impetigo the child needs to be on the antibiotic ointment at least 24 hours, before attending the facility again.

### **Strep Throat**

Children with strep throat often have a fever and complain of sore throat, headache and stomachache. They may also have swollen, tender glands in the neck, or sores around the nose. When an Early Childhood Educator notices these symptoms, they will call you and ask you to pick up your child and you will need to take your child to the doctor for confirmation. If suspected by the doctor, the child must remain at home until confirmation; unless the doctor provides a note specifying that it is safe for the child to return or has been on antibiotics.

for 24 hours before returning, as it is highly infectious.

### **Fifth Disease**

This is an infection of the respiratory system, and is caused by a virus. It begins as a very red rash on the cheeks; one to four days later, a red, lace-like rash appears, first on the arms and then on the rest of the body. The rash may last from 1 to 3 weeks and may be accompanied by a fever. If an Early Childhood Educator discovers the rash, you will be asked to pick up your child and see a doctor for diagnosis. Your child may return to the childcare with a note from the doctor specifying it is safe to return its group. Your child must be free from fever and able to participate in all group activities.

### **Lice**

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp. They lay their eggs, called nits, which stick to hair very close to the scalp. Head lice can be spread through direct head-to-head contact with a person who has lice. They can also be spread by sharing combs, hats, hairbrushes and headphones. For guidelines on how to look for lice, please ask an Early Childhood Educator. If an Early Childhood Educator suspects your child has lice, you will be asked to pick up your child, and check his head for infestation, then again after one week and then again in two weeks, even after treatment. If one member of the family has lice, we suggest that all family members (adults and children) are checked and treated at the same time. A prescription is not needed for treatment, there are several over-the-counter treatments available – your doctor or a pharmacist can advise you. A child cannot return to the childcare center until they have undergone treatment, as lice spread very easily.

### **Summary of illness policy**

If a child is not able to participate in the group activities, or whose symptoms indicate an illness that can be easily communicated to other children, or staff, then the childcare center will ask you to pick up your child. Early Childhood Educators will always put the children's health first, and are very respectful of your time: asking a parent to pick up their child if he/she appears ill is done only after careful observation of the child and any symptoms.

The childcare center will post a notice on the parent board when a diagnosed case of a particular illness has appeared in your child's group or in the childcare to keep your family informed. Your child's Early Childhood Educators will have a copy of a symptom guide and treatment fact sheet for you to take home, if required.

This policy is subject to change and may be updated when needed.

*Reference Vancouver Coastal Health: "When a Child is too Ill to Attend School", February 2008*