

Healthy
Children.
Stronger
Families.
Brighter
Tomorrows!



WINTER WELLNESS

♥ A Guide to Staying Healthy ♥



COVID-19



RSV



Influenza
(Flu)



Measles



Scarlet Fever



Handwashing



What to Do IF...



Family Winter
Wellness Plan

♥ Healthy Choices Today.
Brighter Tomorrows! ♥

A Message to Our Head Start Families

Staying Healthy Together This Winter



Dear Head Start Families,

As the winter months approach, we want to share important information and reminders to help keep your children healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Colder weather often brings an increase in illnesses such as COVID-19, RSV, Flu, Measles, and Scarlet Fever. By working together, we can reduce the spread of germs and keep our classrooms, families, and community healthy.

Inside this packet, you will find helpful information about common winter illnesses, including symptoms, prevention tips, and what to do if your child becomes sick. You will also find a handwashing guide and a Family Winter Wellness Plan with simple steps we can take together.

If your child is not feeling well, please keep them at home and contact your child's healthcare provider. This helps protect other children, staff, and families in our Head Start community. Our staff is also here to support you with questions, resources, and guidance.

Thank you for being an important part of our Head Start family. Together, we can keep our children healthy, learning, and thriving all winter long!

With care and partnership, 

The Action Pathways, Inc. Head Start Team

Let's Work Together to...



Keep our children healthy and in school.



Prevent the spread of illnesses.



Keep sick children at home when needed.



Practice good hand hygiene every day.



Stay up to date on vaccinations.



Support one another as a Head Start family.



Thank you for being part of our Head Start family! 

COVID-19

FAMILY FACT SHEET

A respiratory virus that can spread even when symptoms are mild.

Healthy Children.
Brighter Days.
Stronger Together! ❤️

We keep our friends healthy so we can learn, play and grow together!

What Might I Notice?

Children can have different symptoms. Some may be mild or have no symptoms at all.



Fever or chills



Cough



Sore throat



Runny nose



Tiredness



Headache



Body aches



Sometimes vomiting or diarrhea

Some children have mild symptoms or none at all.

What Should I Do Now?



- ✓ Keep your child home while sick.
- ✓ For typical respiratory illness, wait until symptoms are improving overall and your child has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- ✓ Take extra precautions for the next 5 days.
- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care requirements.

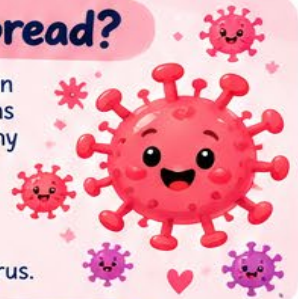


Let's Keep Everyone Healthy! ❤️



How Does It Spread?

COVID-19 spreads from person to person, even when symptoms are mild. It spreads through tiny droplets when people breathe, talk, cough, or sneeze. It can also spread by touching your eyes, nose, or mouth after touching a surface with the virus.



How Can Our Family Help Prevent It?



Keep up with recommended COVID-19 vaccinations.



Wash hands often with soap and water.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Improve fresh airflow and avoid close contact with sick people.

When to Get Help Right Away

CALL 911 for:

- Trouble breathing
- Blue or gray lips
- Severe dehydration
- Inability to wake
- Other life-threatening symptoms



Seek prompt medical advice for:

- Worsening symptoms
- Any fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under 3 months



Please tell your Head Start center about symptoms, a diagnosis, or a concerning exposure.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and your center's return-to-care requirements.



INFLUENZA (FLU)

FAMILY FACT SHEET

The flu can hit little ones quickly.

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Brighter Days.
Stronger
Together! ❤️



What Might I Notice?

The flu can come on suddenly. Children may have one or more of these symptoms:



Sudden fever
(though not
always)



Cough



Sore throat



Stuffy or
runny nose



Headache



Body aches



Tiredness



Sometimes
vomiting or
diarrhea

How Does It Spread?

The flu spreads easily from person to person, especially when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Tiny droplets can get into the air and onto surfaces. Children can also catch the flu by touching something with the virus and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.



How Can Our Family Help Prevent It?



Annual flu
vaccination
is recommended
for most people
6 months
and older.



Wash
hands often
with soap
and water.



Cover
coughs and
sneezes.



Keep sick
visitors away
from your
child.

What Should I Do Now?

- ✓ Call your child's healthcare provider early, especially for children under age 5 or with medical conditions.
- ✓ Flu medicines can work best when started promptly.
- ✓ Keep your child home until symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care requirements.



When to Get Help Right Away

CALL 911 for:

- Trouble breathing or fast breathing
- Blue or gray lips
- Severe dehydration
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Any other life-threatening symptoms



Seek prompt medical advice for:

- Worsening symptoms
- If your child is not drinking enough
- Any fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under 3 months



Please tell your Head Start center about symptoms, a diagnosis, or a concerning exposure.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and your center's return-to-care requirements.



Let's Keep
Our Head Start Family
Healthy! ❤️



RSV

FAMILY FACT SHEET

A common respiratory virus that can be especially hard on babies and young children.

Little Breaths Matter! ❤️

Healthy children make bright tomorrows! ❤️



What Might I Notice?

Symptoms can be like a cold at first, but RSV can become more serious, especially for babies.

- ✓ Runny nose
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Sneezing
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Wheezing
- ✓ Reduced appetite
- ✓ Unusual fussiness or tiredness
- ✓ Feeding difficulties (in babies)
- ✓ Breathing pauses (in young infants)



How Does It Spread?

RSV spreads easily from person to person, especially in places where children are close together.



Through coughs and sneezes



By touching surfaces with germs and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth



By sharing items like cups, utensils, and toys



By close contact with sick people

How Can Our Family Help Prevent It?

- ✓ Wash hands often with soap and water.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect frequently touched items and surfaces.
- ✓ Avoid sharing cups, drinks, or utensils.
- ✓ Keep sick visitors away from babies.
- ✓ Ask your child's clinician about RSV protection recommended during pregnancy or for eligible infants.



What Should I Do Now? ❤️

- ✓ Watch your child's breathing and drinking closely.
- ✓ Call a healthcare professional if your child is not feeding well, breathing faster, or symptoms are getting worse.
- ✓ Keep your child home until symptoms improve and fever has been absent for at least 24 hours without fever medicine.
- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care policy.



When to Get Help Right Away

CALL 911 for:

- Severe trouble breathing or breathing very fast
- Blue or gray lips
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Severe dehydration
- Any other life-threatening symptoms

Seek prompt medical advice for:

- Worsening symptoms
- Any fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under 3 months



MEASLES

FAMILY FACT SHEET

Measles is very contagious and can be serious.

Vaccines Help Keep Our Children Safe!



What Might I Notice?

Measles symptoms usually start 7–14 days after being exposed. Early symptoms can look like a cold, but a rash follows.



High fever (may be very high, up to 104°F)



Cough



Runny nose



Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)



Tiredness



Tiny white spots inside the mouth (Koplik spots)



A rash that usually starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body

What Should I Do Now?



- ✓ Keep your child home if they have symptoms or have been exposed to measles.



- ✓ Contact your child's healthcare provider for testing and guidance.



- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care requirements.

- ✓ Let your Head Start center know immediately if your child is diagnosed with measles or has been exposed.

We're here for you!

Please tell your Head Start center about symptoms, a diagnosis, or a concerning exposure.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and your center's return-to-care requirements.

How Does It Spread?

Measles is one of the most contagious viruses. It spreads through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. It can also stay in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours after an infected person leaves the area.



How Can Our Family Help Prevent It?



- ✓ Keep MMR vaccinations up to date for all children.
- ✓ Help your child avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ✓ Teach children to wash hands often.
- ✓ Clean frequently touched toys and surfaces.
- ✓ Keep sick family members at home.



When to Get Help Right Away

CALL 911 for:

- Trouble breathing
- Blue or gray lips
- Severe dehydration
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Seizures
- Any other life-threatening symptoms



Seek prompt medical advice for:

- Worsening symptoms
- Any fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under 3 months



Head Start
Strong Together!



SCARLET FEVER

FAMILY FACT SHEET

A bacterial infection caused by group A strep.

Healthy
Children.
Brighter Days.
Stronger
Together! ❤️

What Might I Notice?

Scarlet fever often starts with strep throat symptoms, followed by a red, sandpaper-like rash.



Sore throat
(often sudden)



Fever



Headache



Stomachache



Red, swollen
tongue
(strawberry tongue)



Red, sandpaper-
like rash (usually
starts on the face
and spreads)

How Does It Spread?

Scarlet fever is caused by group A Streptococcus (strep) bacteria. It spreads from person to person through:

- Close contact with an infected person
- Coughing or sneezing
- Sharing cups, utensils, or toys
- Touching surfaces with the bacteria and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth



Keep
Germs
from
Spreading! ❤️

How Can Our Family Help Prevent It?



Wash hands
often with
soap and water.



Cover coughs
and sneezes.



Avoid sharing
cups, utensils,
and toys.



Keep sick
family members
at home.

What Should I Do Now?

- ✓ Keep your child home if they have symptoms or have been diagnosed with scarlet fever.
- ✓ Contact your child's healthcare provider. Your child will need antibiotics.
- ✓ Keep your child home until they have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours AND are feeling better (follow center policy).
- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care requirements.



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When to Get Help Right Away

CALL 911 for:

- Trouble breathing
- Blue or gray lips
- Severe dehydration
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Any other life-threatening symptoms



Seek prompt medical advice for:

- Worsening symptoms
- If your child is not drinking enough
- Any fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher in a baby under 3 months



Please tell your Head Start center about symptoms, a diagnosis, or a concerning exposure.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and your center's return-to-care requirements.



Clean Hands
Healthy Kids
Brighter Days! ❤️

WASH AWAY the GERMS!

Handwashing helps keep you healthy,
your friends healthy, and our classrooms healthy!



1 Get Ready!

Turn on warm water
and wet your hands.



2 Add Soap!

Use enough soap
to make bubbles.



3 Scrub All Over!

Rub your hands together
for at least 20 seconds.



4 Rinse Well!

Rinse all the soap
off with clean, warm
water.



5 Dry Your Hands!

Use a clean towel
or paper towel
to dry your hands.



6 You Did It!

Clean hands help stop
germs and keep everyone
healthy!



Wash Your Hands...



Before
eating



After using
the bathroom



After coughing
or sneezing



After playing
outside



After
being around
someone who
is sick

Remember...

- ❤️ Clean hands stop germs from spreading.
- ❤️ Use soap and water.
- ❤️ Scrub for at least 20 seconds.
- ❤️ Handwashing keeps YOU, your friends, and our Head Start family healthy!



Germs are
too small to see,
but handwashing
washes them away!



❤️ **Healthy Children.
Stronger Families.
Brighter Tomorrows!** ❤️

When in doubt,
keep your child
home and
call the doctor!

What to Do IF...

A Family Guide for Common Situations

When children are sick, it can be hard to know what to do. This guide can help you make the best decision for your child, your family, and our Head Start community.

IF my child has a fever...



- ✓ Keep your child home.
- ✓ Monitor for other symptoms (like cough, sore throat, rash, etc.).
- ✓ Your child can return when they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever medicine (according to center policy).

IF my child is coughing or has a runny nose...



- ✓ Keep your child home if they are not feeling well or if symptoms are getting worse.
- ✓ Encourage rest, fluids, and humidified air.
- ✓ Your child can return when symptoms are improving and they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever medicine (according to center policy).

IF my child has a rash...



- ✓ Keep your child home.
- ✓ Contact your child's healthcare provider to find out the cause.
- ✓ Some rashes (like measles or scarlet fever) are very contagious.
- ✓ Your child can return when they have been evaluated by a healthcare provider and have clearance to return, following center policy.

IF my child is vomiting or has diarrhea...



- ✓ Keep your child home.
- ✓ Encourage small sips of fluids.
- ✓ Your child can return when they have not vomited or had diarrhea for at least 24 hours and are feeling better (according to center policy).

IF my child has trouble breathing...



- ✓ This is an emergency.
- ✓ Call 911 right away if your child is having severe trouble breathing, blue or gray lips, or is hard to wake.
- ✓ Seek prompt medical advice for worsening symptoms.
- ✓ Keep your child home and follow medical guidance for return to care.

IF my child has been exposed to a contagious illness...



- ✓ Tell your Head Start center right away.
- ✓ Watch for symptoms for the next few days (usually 7–14 days, depending on the illness).
- ✓ Follow guidance from your healthcare provider and our center.
- ✓ Keep your child home if symptoms start or if instructed by a healthcare provider or the center.

Call Your Healthcare Provider If...



- You are unsure what is causing your child's symptoms.
- Symptoms are not improving or are getting worse.
- Your child is under 3 months with a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- You need guidance on testing or treatment.

Tell Your Head Start Center



- If your child is sick.
- If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness (such as COVID-19, RSV, flu, measles, or scarlet fever).
- If your child has been exposed to a contagious illness.
- If your child will be absent due to illness.

Remember...

- ✓ Keep sick children at home.
- ✓ Clean hands and surfaces often.
- ✓ Teach children to cover coughs and sneezes.
- ✓ Keep up with recommended vaccines.
- ✓ Communicate with your center.
- ✓ Together, we can keep our classrooms healthy!



Healthy Children.
Stronger Families.
Brighter Tomorrows!

FAMILY WINTER WELLNESS PLAN

Small Steps. Healthy Habits. Brighter Days! ❤️

Let's work together to keep our children healthy, safe, and ready to learn all winter long!



1 Keep Vaccinations Up to Date

Vaccines help protect your child from serious illnesses like flu, COVID-19, measles, and other preventable diseases.

- ✓ Talk with your child's healthcare provider about recommended vaccines.
- ✓ Keep a copy of your child's vaccine record.
- ✓ Ask about the flu vaccine every year.



2 Practice Good Hand Hygiene

Clean hands stop germs from spreading!

- ✓ Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ✓ Help young children wash hands before eating, after using the restroom, after coughing or sneezing, and after playing outside.
- ✓ Use hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.



3 Keep Your Child Home When Sick

Rest helps your child get better and keeps others healthy.

- ✓ Keep your child home if they have a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or are not feeling well.
- ✓ Follow your center's return-to-care guidelines.
- ✓ Contact your healthcare provider if symptoms worsen or do not improve.



4 Encourage Healthy Habits

Healthy everyday choices help build strong bodies and strong minds!

- ✓ Offer nutritious meals and snacks: fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- ✓ Make sure your child gets enough sleep.
- ✓ Encourage plenty of water.
- ✓ Dress your child for the weather (layers, hats, gloves, and coats).
- ✓ Limit screen time and encourage active play.



5 Watch for Symptoms

Know the signs of common winter illnesses.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| ✓ Fever | ✓ Vomiting or diarrhea |
| ✓ Cough | ✓ Trouble breathing |
| ✓ Runny or stuffy nose | ✓ Feeling very tired |
| ✓ Sore throat | ✓ Loss of appetite |
| ✓ Rash | ✓ Any unusual changes |



6 Keep Your Environment Clean

Clean spaces help stop germs.

- ✓ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and toys.
- ✓ Teach children to keep their hands and objects out of their mouths.
- ✓ Avoid sharing cups, utensils, and toys.
- ✓ Make sure everyone in the home practices good hand hygiene.



7 Stay Connected

We are here to partner with you!

- ✓ Keep your child's Center Director or Family Social Worker informed.
- ✓ Let us know if your child is sick, diagnosed with a contagious illness, or exposed to someone who is ill.
- ✓ Share any questions or concerns. We are here to support your family.



Our Family's Winter Wellness Checklist

We can do this together!

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Vaccines are up to date | ☐ Dress for the weather |
| ☐ Wash hands often | ☐ Clean and disinfect at home |
| ☐ Keep child home when sick | ☐ Avoid sharing items |
| ☐ Eat healthy meals and snacks | ☐ Watch for symptoms |
| ☐ Get enough sleep | ☐ Stay in touch with our Head Start center |
| ☐ Drink water | ☐ Keep our family healthy! |

Healthy Choices Today
Brighter Tomorrows! ❤️

