

Instances When a School Nurse Should Contact Parents

A school nurse should contact parents in the following situations, either for immediate pick-up, further medical evaluation, or to inform them of a concerning health issue:

Possible Reasons to Contact Parents:

- **Head Injury** – Any significant bump, fall, or suspected concussion (loss of consciousness, dizziness, vomiting, confusion, etc.)
- **Severe Allergic Reaction** – Anaphylaxis or hives with breathing difficulty (epinephrine may be required)
- **Seizure** – Any seizure activity, whether known or unknown, especially if it's prolonged or abnormal for the student
- **Difficulty Breathing** – Severe asthma attack or respiratory distress that is not relieved with an inhaler
- **Chest Pain** – Unexplained or severe chest pain (especially in students with underlying conditions)
- **Severe Bleeding** – Wounds that won't stop bleeding, deep cuts, or possible need for stitches
- **Fracture/Suspected Broken Bone** – Obvious deformity, severe pain, or inability to move the limb
- **Severe Burns** – Second or third-degree burns, large blistering areas, or burns to the face/hands/genitals
- **Loss of Consciousness** – Fainting or unresponsiveness for any period of time.
- **Neck or Spine Injury** – Following a fall, hit, or accident that causes pain, numbness, or inability to move
- **High Fever** – Temperature above 100.4°F, especially with additional symptoms like lethargy or vomiting
- **Persistent Vomiting or Diarrhea** – More than one episode, signs of dehydration, or inability to keep fluids down
- **Significant Skin Rash** – Widespread rash, unknown cause, or potential infectious rash (chickenpox, hand-foot-and-mouth, etc.)
- **Eye Issues** – Red, swollen, painful, or discharge-filled eye (possible pink eye or infection)
- **Severe Headache** – Especially if associated with vision changes, dizziness, or sensitivity to light/sound
- **Potential Sprain or Strain** – Swelling, bruising, or pain limiting movement but no obvious deformity
- **Severe Abdominal Pain** – Persistent pain lasting longer than 30 minutes, especially if localized to one area (appendicitis concern)
- **Medication Reaction** – Any reaction following a school-administered medication that concerns the nurse
- **Significant Mental Health Concern** – Self-harm, suicidal thoughts, severe anxiety attack, or panic episode
- **Recurrent Minor Complaints** – Frequent visits for the same issue that may require parental follow-up

- **Lice/Nits** – Parent notification required for treatment, but the child may stay in school depending on policy
 - **Mild Allergic Reaction** – Localized swelling, mild rash, or itching (especially if no history of anaphylaxis)
 - **Worsening Cold Symptoms** – If the student has a persistent cough, worsening sore throat, or fatigue that may require rest at home
 - **Lost or Broken Eyeglasses** – If affecting the student's ability to see and learn
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Instances When a Phone Call Might Not Be Needed

While documentation is still necessary, a phone call home might not be required in these cases:

- **Minor Scrapes and Bruises** – Treated with cleaning, bandaging, and ice if necessary
 - **Mild Headache** – If improved with water, rest, or over-the-counter medication (if allowed per school policy)
 - **Mild Stomach Ache** – Without vomiting, diarrhea, or fever, and improves with rest
 - **Mild Cold Symptoms** – Occasional coughing, sneezing, or runny nose without fever
 - **Slight Bumps from Playground Injuries** – If the student is alert, responsive, and resumes normal activity
 - **Nosebleed (Stopped Quickly)** – If controlled within a few minutes and no history of frequent or severe nosebleeds
 - **Minor Bug Bite or Localized Rash** – Without significant swelling, pain, or signs of an allergic reaction
 - **Fatigue or Sleepiness** – If the student is simply tired and returns to class after a short rest
 - **Mild Anxiety or Emotional Upset** – If resolved with counseling, hydration, and relaxation techniques
 - **Lost Baby Tooth** – Unless there is significant bleeding or pain
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General Notes:

- **Documentation is required for all visits.**
- **Use professional judgment** when deciding whether a call is necessary.
- **If in doubt, contact parents.** It's always better to over-communicate than under-communicate, especially for younger children or students with medical conditions.

