



## The Cough Conundrum – Stay Home or Safe to Go Out?

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If you have been to your child's school or daycare during the cough and cold or allergy season, you have undoubtedly heard a contagious chorus of coughs and sniffles. On average, a young child will have 6-10 colds per year and the virus swap is at its peak during the winter season. When your child is sick, many parents struggle with knowing when to keep them home, or when to send them back into The Wild.

Below please find tips from Zarbee's creator, Dr. Zak Zarbock, on when it's safe for children to go to school and when it's best for them to stay home and recover.

### Red Light

Keep your child home, avoid contact with others and consider seeing your pediatrician if symptoms include:

- Fever of 101 degrees or higher
- Wheezing or shortness of breath during normal activity
- Cough that disrupts regular activities
- Constant yellow or green drainage from the nose
- Ill appearance or excessive fatigue

### Yellow Light

Trust your judgment. Your child may continue regular activities unless he or she needs additional rest or is showing early signs of red light symptoms. These symptoms may include:

- Improving fever. Your child can return to a regular routine once he or she has been fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Sporadic cough that minimally interferes with activities
- Congestion may be present, but minimal green or yellow discharge from the nose

### Green Light

While not 100%, your child is okay to return to school. Symptoms may include:

- Mild, infrequent cough that does not negatively impact daily activities
- Clear runny nose
- Active, playful, and rested

Remember, the most important way to keep children healthy and in school is by reducing the transmission of viral infections. Proper hygiene including the use of disposable tissues and coughing into the elbow should be encouraged. Frequent hand washing cannot be overemphasized. Avoid touching the mouth, nose and eyes, as they are the gateway for unwanted viruses.

“I see over 30 coughing, gagging, fevering children a day and these tips are what keeps me going,” says Dr. Zarbock.

And finally, when in doubt don't hesitate to contact your pediatrician – they are there to help.