

9 TIPS to keep kids germ-free at school



Some things spread like wildfire in a school – the latest lingo, the latest trends and, unfortunately, the latest germs. Share these tips with your kids to keep them as healthy as possible:

Nearly **22 million** school days are missed each year due to colds alone.



WASH YOUR HANDS.

Teach younger kids to scrub their hands in warm, soapy water until they finish singing the entire alphabet song. Teach older kids to count to 20 before rinsing.



DON'T SHARE.

This applies to personal items, such as water bottles, earbuds, hats, hairbrushes and lip balms.



COVER SNEEZES AND COUGHS.

Teach kids to sneeze and cough into the crook of their elbow or a tissue – not their hands.



HANDS OFF YOUR FACE.

Teach younger kids especially to keep their fingers out of their mouths, noses and ears.



SKIP THE WATER FOUNTAIN.

If your children's school doesn't allow water bottles, teach them to use the water fountain without putting their mouths on the spigot.



EAT YOUR FRUITS AND VEGGIES.

A nutritious diet can give young immune systems a healthy boost.



GET ENOUGH SLEEP.

Sleep helps keep kids' immune systems strong. Follow these guidelines per night:
Ages 10 to 17: 8.5 to 9.5 hours
Ages 5 to 10: 10 to 11 hours
Ages 3 to 5: 11 to 13 hours



GET THE FLU SHOT.

This is the single best way to protect your kids from influenza every year.



STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.

Sick kids' weakened immune systems may make them vulnerable to even more germs – and they need to avoid infecting others.

» To learn more about our pediatric services or to find a doctor, visit Rainbow.org.

Expert: Claudia Hoyen, MD, pediatric infectious disease specialist, UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital
Additional source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

