




Back to School Basics to Prevent Infections

By: Erica Miles, BSRT-NPS; Annie Wirtz, PharmD, BCPPS

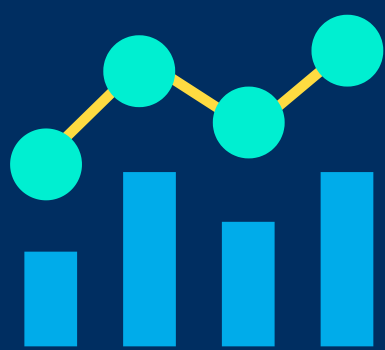
A new school year = more illnesses! Between 2010-2016, **~70%** of surveyed children **missed at least 1 day of school** for illness.


 **Infections can spread** by coming into contact with microbes in the air, touching contaminated surfaces and then your eyes, nose, or mouth, or direct contact with a sick person.

This can include conjunctivitis (pink eye), gastroenteritis, common colds, influenza, and other viral infections.

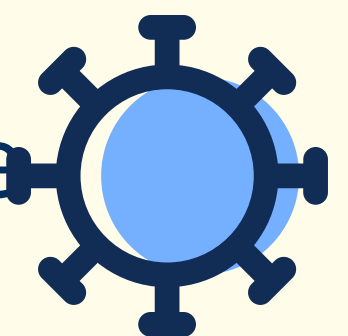


Did you know you can see how **active certain viruses** in your community? [Click here.](#)



 Check out the following **recommendations and resources** to **keep the germs away** this school year!

Many **school absences** are due to **respiratory viruses** like flu, COVID, and RSV? Keep up to date on these vaccines.



Don't send sick kids to school/daycare. Learn when they should **stay home** & can **return**. Refer to school or state policies too.

Practice healthy habits by **coughing** into a tissue/elbow and washing your hands. Wash your hands after **blowing your nose**.



Frequent handwashing is most effective to **prevent infection**. Here are **tips** to help children with handwashing.

If you or your child do get sick, remember **antibiotics aren't always needed**. Use them appropriately to prevent **resistance and side effects**.



Author, Erica Miles, has worked at Children's Mercy for 9 years. She started as a respiratory therapist, and in 2023, took on a new career challenge working in Infection Prevention and Control.