

Dr. Approved 8/22

Mayo Clinic Minute: Reducing viral infection risks when sending kids off to school

It's back to school for many kids around the nation. And once they hit the classroom, you may notice more runny noses and other symptoms associated with viral and bacterial infections.

Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist with the Mayo Children's Center, says you might not be able to stop some of these illnesses, but you can reduce risks.

Video	Audio
	Kids returning to school at the end of summer often coincides with the start of the respiratory virus season.
NIPUNIE RAJAPAKSE, M.D. Pediatric Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"You've got kids from lots of different households who are now coming together in a relatively confined space of a classroom."
	And sharing more than lunches. They're sharing viruses they've been exposed to at home.
	Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse says some childhood illnesses are inevitable, but there are things families can do to reduce risks.
	"Making sure that your child's vaccines are up to date before they return to school is great, helps prevent things like influenza, COVID, other respiratory infections especially."
	Teach your child when and how to wash their hands. Use warm water with soap for 30 seconds before they eat, after they use the bathroom, and after they sneeze or cough.
	It helps prevent the spread of germs that can make them and others sick.
	And keep them home if they do become sick.
	"If your child has an illness that is likely something that's contagious to others, the best thing to do is to keep them home until they're feeling well."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.