



CHICKENPOX (VARICELLA)

Your child may have been exposed to this disease

If my child has this disease, when can he or she return to school or child care?

Children with chickenpox may **NOT** return to school or child care **until all blisters have scabbed over and there are no new blisters.**

In the rare case a vaccinated child develops chickenpox, the child may not return to school until there have been no new bumps or blisters for 24 hours.

If your child has symptoms, please contact your child's healthcare provider.

Chickenpox is a virus and causes:

- An itchy rash of small pink bumps all over the body.
- Some bumps turn into round, hard, shiny blisters that look like drops of water on the skin.
- Blisters will dry and scab over.
- Fever, fatigue, headache, and/or loss of appetite.

Symptoms usually start 14 to 16 days after a person is exposed, but it can take up to 28 days. If your child has not received the vaccine or has not had this illness before, your child may become ill.

Rarely, people who have had the vaccine get chickenpox. If this happens, they usually have milder illness, fewer blisters, and bumps that may not develop into blisters.

Chickenpox can be a serious illness for adults, pregnant women, and for children with immune system problems that make it hard to fight off infection.

How is chickenpox spread?

- Coughing and sneezing
- Touching fluid from the nose or eyes or the fluid from a chickenpox blister
- Touching items that have been touched by fluid from blisters, the nose, or eyes.

A sick person can spread the virus beginning 1 to 2 days before their rash appears

What can I do now?

Check your child for symptoms of chickenpox. If your child has not had chickenpox or had the chickenpox vaccine the illness might be prevented or made less severe by getting the vaccine 3-5 days after exposure. **A pregnant woman or person with a weakened immune system who has been exposed or has symptoms of chickenpox should contact their doctor immediately.**

Do not bring your ill child into a crowded waiting room or hospital since this may spread the illness. **Keep your child at home until all the blisters have scabbed over and there are no new blisters.** Do NOT give your child aspirin because it might cause a serious disease called Reye's syndrome.