



Chicken Pox (Varicella)

CAUSE and DEFINITION:

- Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). It can cause an itchy, blister-like rash among other symptoms.

CHARACTERISTICS:

The classic symptom of chickenpox is a rash that turns into itchy, fluid-filled blisters that eventually turn into scabs.	Other typical symptoms that may begin to appear one to two days before rash include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rash may first show up on the chest, back, and face, and then spread over the entire body, including inside the mouth, eyelids, or genital area.• Blisters emerge over several days, so blisters that are in different stage are common.• It usually takes about one week for all of the blisters to become scabs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Runny nose and cough• Tiredness• Loss of appetite• Headache

INCUBATION / CONTAGION:

- It takes about 2 weeks (from 10 to 21 days) after exposure to a person with chickenpox for someone to develop chickenpox
- A person with chickenpox is considered contagious beginning 1 to 2 days before rash onset until all the chickenpox lesions have crusted (scabbed)
- Symptoms typically last 4-7 days
- Once all blisters have scabbed over and no new blisters have appeared, the contagious period has ended.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION & CONTROL:

- Chickenpox is highly contagious.
- It is spread through respiratory transmission (airborne) and respiratory droplets (coughing).
- Direct contact with closed or open blisters.
- All students should have received the immunization unless there has been a medical exemption that someone has already had the disease.

HOME MANAGEMENT:

- Contact your child's physician for diagnosis, treatment and to determine if they need to be seen especially if you have people in the house who have lowered immunity or are or could be pregnant.
- Over the counter medications may help with symptoms, contact your pediatrician
- Good hand washing hygiene and cough etiquette (cough in elbow)

RETURN TO SCHOOL:

- All blisters have scabbed over, and no new blisters have appeared in the last 24 hours. (about 6 days after start of rash). And no fever for 24 hours without the use of medication.