

Disease Dictionary

Conjunctivitis (Pink eye):

Conjunctivitis is a viral or bacterial infection of the eye. Eyes burn and/or itch. In the morning, eyes may have matted lashes and are hard to open. White discharge is usually seen in the affected eye.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Conjunctivitis can be transmitted by contact with drainage from an affected eye or by the respiratory tract. It can also be transmitted from indirect contact with articles and surfaces contaminated by drainage of an affected person.
 - **Control measures?**
 - An affected eye needs to be treated by antibiotics prescribed by a physician. Your child may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic eye drops. For more information talk with your physician.
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Chickenpox:

Chickenpox is caused by a virus. About 24 hours before a rash appears, children develop a slight fever, sore throat, and burning eyes. When the rash appears these first symptoms disappear. The rash first appears red and later forms blisters, which eventually crust over. The rash will be very itchy and uncomfortable.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Chickenpox can be transmitted by contact with drainage from lesions of an affected person or indirect contact with articles and surfaces contaminated by drainage of an affected person.
 - **Control measures?**
 - There is no medicine to cure chickenpox. Keep your child from itching the rash by applying calamine lotion bought from a drug store and giving warm baths with 1 cup of baking soda. Your child will need to be excluded from school until all lesions have crusted over. For more information talk with your physician.
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Diarrhea:

Diarrhea is 3 or more loose stools with a watery consistency. Additional symptoms that can occur are nausea and vomiting, stomachaches, headaches or fever.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Person to person contact contaminated food, objects or hands.

- **Control measures?**
 - Medicine can help with certain causative agents. You will need to see your physician. Hand washing and good personal hygiene may reduce the risk of contracting the causative agent. For more information talk with your physician.
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Fifth Disease (Parvovirus B19):

Fifth Disease commonly affects children. The first symptoms may include fever, runny nose, and headache. It typically causes a "slapped cheek" rash on the face--the most recognized feature of fifth disease.

- **Method of transmission**
 - Parvovirus B19 spreads through respiratory secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus) when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You are most contagious when it seems like you have "just a cold" and before you get the rash or joint pain and swelling.
 - **Control measures?**
 - After you get the rash, you are probably not contagious. So, it is usually safe for you to go back to work or for your child to go back to school or a child care center. People with fifth disease are most contagious before they get rash or joint pain and swelling.
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Flu or Cold:

[Click here to learn how you can tell a cold from a flu](#)

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Flu and cold are both transmitted directly when in contact with the infected person. They also can be transmitted indirectly by items freshly soiled by an infected person.
- **Control measures?**
 - Children should wash their hands thoroughly and frequently, especially after blowing their nose. They should cover their nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.

If your child visits the doctor and may need to take medications at school, please call the school for information regarding the necessary forms and school policy.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:

A virus named Coxsackie causes this disease. Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease usually begins with a moderate fever. Small, round blisters develop inside the mouth, usually on the tongue and inside of cheeks. Small round fluid-filled blisters may also appear on the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet and between fingers and toes. The illness lasts up to two weeks. The mouth sores can suppress a child's appetite and make chewing uncomfortable.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - This disease can be transmitted directly by contact with respiratory drainage from an infected person or indirectly with articles and surfaces contaminated by drainage of an affected person. The virus can be found in feces of an affected person for one month.
 - **Control measures?**
 - There is no medicine to cure this disease. Children should drink plenty of cold fluids. Frequent hand washing may help reduce the risk of contracting the virus. For more information talk with your physician.
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Head lice or Pediculosis:

Head lice are tiny insects that live off the scalp. They attach white to yellow-brown eggs to the hair shaft. When the eggs hatch, new insects begin to bite and irritate the scalp. These bites cause itching, and if your child scratches, a possible infection.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Head lice are transmitted by direct, head-to-head contact with an infested person. Head lice are also transmitted indirectly by combs, brushes, hats or other materials infected by a person. Lice do not jump, fly or swim.
 - **Control measures?**
 - Hair must be treated with an appropriate lice shampoo. You should consult with your physician. Bedding and clothing must be disinfected by machine washing in hot water. Combs and brushes also need thorough cleaning and vacuuming carpets. Most importantly, all eggs (nits) must be removed from the hair shaft to avoid re-infestation.
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Impetigo:

Impetigo is a skin infection usually around the nose and mouth that can spread to the hands and arms. The rash starts as small blisters that become yellow, crusty, and weepy. Itching is common.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Impetigo is transmitted by direct contact from draining sores or by indirect contact with articles and surfaces contaminated by an affected person.

- **Control measures?**

- Children with impetigo may require an antibiotic ointment. Please see your physician as soon as possible. Children will need to be excluded until 24 hours of treatment is completed.
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Meningitis:

There are two types of meningitis, viral and the more serious form, bacterial. Meningitis is an infection of the meninges (a thin lining covering the brain and spinal cord) can be caused by a number of different viruses. The symptoms of viral meningitis may include fever, intense headache, stiff neck and fatigue. The symptoms for bacterial meningitis can include a high fever, stiff neck, nausea and vomiting, sensitivity to light, behavioral changes, irritability and sluggishness. These people become severely ill quickly.

- **Method of transmission?**

- The most common way to contract meningitis is by person-to-person contact through bodily fluids such as saliva, feces, urine, or phlegm.

- **Control measures?**

- The best prevention for viral meningitis is thorough hand washing with plenty of soap and water. Bacterial meningitis is the more severe form of the disease and must be treated by a doctor with appropriate antibiotics. A spinal tap is needed to determine which bacteria are present to decide on the correct antibiotic treatment. This form of meningitis can be fatal if treatment is started too late. Antibiotic treatment is also necessary for anyone who has had direct contact with the oral or respiratory secretions of an infected person. A hospital stay is usually needed for bacterial meningitis. For more information talk with your physician.
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Ringworm:

Ringworm is not a worm but a fungal infection of the scalp, skin or feet. In scalp ringworm, you will find found scaly patches of temporary baldness. Ringworm of the skin erupts with round, ring-like reddish rash that may burn and itch. Ringworm of the feet or athlete's feet causes cracks between the toes.

- **Method of transmission?**

- Ringworm is transmitted by direct contact with lesions of the affected person or indirect contact with articles and surfaces contaminated by an affected person

- **Control measures?**

- Scalp ringworm is treated with an oral fungicide prescribed by a physician. Skin and feet are treated with a topical anti-fungal ointment. If a student is involved in contact sports, they must be excluded until all lesions are healed. All other

students with lesions should be excluded until 24 hours of treatment is completed. For more information talk with your physician.

Scabies:

Scabies is an infection of the skin caused by a mite. The mite burrows under the skin leaving a patchy red rash. This causes intense itching, especially at night. The rash is usually found between the fingers, wrist, elbows, armpits, and beltline.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Scabies can be transferred from person to person or contact from clothing or bed linen. Mites can be spread to other body parts by hands.
 - **Control measures?**
 - Your physician will need to prescribe an ointment to be applied to infected skin. Children will need to be excluded until treatment is completed. Clothing and bed linen will also need to be washed. For more information talk with your physician.
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Strep Throat:

Strep throat is an infection of the throat caused by the streptococcal bacterium. The symptoms include a red sore throat with pus spots, fever, tender, and swollen lymph glands.

- **Method of transmission?**
 - Direct contact with nose and throat secretions of an infected person. Indirect contact with objects or hands contaminated with secretions of an infected person. Indirect contact is rare
- **Control measures?**
 - A throat culture will inform your physician if your child is positive for strep throat. Your child cannot return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic medicine. It is very important to be seen by a physician and treated with antibiotics because the strep germ in the throat can cause heart problems. For more information talk with your physician.

You can also obtain information at the Centers for Disease Control website.