

Parent Information Chicken Pox - Varicella

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Your child may develop a mild fever and an itchy rash. The rash usually starts on the scalp or trunk of the body. The rash looks like red bumps which become filled with fluid-like blisters. These blisters dry up in 3-4 days and crust over. New blisters continue to develop for about 5 days. The rash will spread to all parts of the body.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Chicken Pox is spread:

- Through the air by coughing/sneezing
- By touching the rash of an infected person
- A person is contagious from 1-2 days before the rash appears and continues to be contagious until all the blisters are scabbed over.

After your child has been exposed to chicken pox, it may take anywhere from 11 to 21 days before rash develops.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Usually, treatment is not required. You will want to contact your health care provider to obtain information about how to control your child's itching. Use **NON-ASPIRIN** products to treat a fever. Contact your health care provider if you have concerns about your child's health during the course of chicken pox.

WHEN CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL?

Your child may return to school once blisters have stopped forming and have all scabbed over. This usually occurs 6-10 days after the beginning of the rash.

If you, your child and/or adolescent have not had chicken pox, call your health care provider about the chicken pox vaccine. Since the introduction of the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine in 1995, the number of chicken pox cases has decreased dramatically in the U.S. One dose of the vaccine is completely effective in preventing severe chicken pox. However, up to 20% of children are not fully protected after one dose and may still get mild chicken pox disease. A recommendation for a second dose of the vaccine was made in June, 2006. If you are pregnant and have not had chicken pox, talk to your health care provider.

If you have any questions, concerns or think your child may have Chicken Pox, please contact the WIS Health Office.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Alison Potter, R.N.

District Nurse
608.838.4500- ext. 4761.