

Chickenpox

Chickenpox (varicella zoster) is a viral illness. It is common for children to get chickenpox. It may be prevented by vaccination.

Symptoms

Your child will have a rash that begins as red bumps and may have a fever.

Spread

- By touching the blister fluid or secretions from the nose/mouth.
- By coughing or sneezing.

Incubation Period

If your child is infected it may take 10-21 days for symptoms to begin.

Contagious Period

From 1-2 days before the rash begins until all blisters have become scabs. Scabs usually form within 6 days.

Exclusion from School

Until all the blisters have dried into scabs; usually by day 6 after the rash began.

Treatment

Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider.

Fifth disease (Parovirus) is a rash illness caused by a virus.

Symptoms

Your child may have a sore throat or a low-grade fever. A rash that causes very red cheeks (a "slapped cheek" look) in children. the rash often begins on the cheeks and moves to the arms, upper body, buttocks, and legs. the rash looks very fine, lacy, and pink. It usually fades in 3 to 7 days.

Incubation Period

If your child is infected, it may take 4 to 21 days for symptoms to start. However, the rash may come and go for weeks, when your child is in the sunlight or heat.

Spread

- By coughing or sneezing.
- By touching contaminated hands, surfaces, and objects.

Contagious Period

Most contagious before the beginning of the rash and unlikely to be contagious after the rash begins.

Exclusion from School

None, if other rash-causing illnesses are ruled out by a healthcare provider. Persons with fifth disease are no longer infectious once the rash begins.

Treatment

No specific treatment.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a viral infection that causes a blister-like rash.

Symptoms

Your child may have a runny nose, low-grade fever, and sometimes a sore throat. A blister-like rash occurs in the mouth. It may be on the sides of the tongue, inside the cheeks, and on the gums. These sores may last 7 to 10 days. This rash may occur on the palms and fingers of the hands and on the bottom of the feet.

Spread

- By Coughing and sneezing.
- By touching contaminated hands, surfaces, and objects.

Incubation Period

If your child is infected, it may take 3 to 6 days for symptoms to start.

Contagious Period

During the first week of illness. The virus may be in the stool for several weeks.

Exclusion from School

Until fever is gone and child is well enough to participate in routine activities (sores or rash may still be present).

Treatment

No specific treatment.

Head Lice

Anyone can get head lice. Head lice are very small brownish-colored insects that live on the head. They are less than 1/8th of an inch long. They lay eggs (nits) close to the scalp. The eggs are tiny (size of the eye of a small needle) and gray or white in color.

Symptoms

Itching of the head and neck. Look for:

- Crawling lice in the hair, usually there aren't very many.
- Eggs (nits) glued to the hair, often found behind the ears and at the back of the neck.
- Scratch marks on the head or back of the neck at the hairline.

Spread

By head-to-head contact. Check your child for lice often. Lice do not jump or fly; they crawl and can fall off the head. Head lice do not live longer than 48 hours off the head. They only lay their eggs while on the head. The eggs do not hatch if they fall off the head. Lice do not spread to or from pets.

Incubation Period

If your child is infested with lice it will take 7 to 10 days from when the eggs are laid until they hatch.

Contagious Period

Until treated with a lice killing product.

Exclusion from School

Until first treatment is complete and no live lice are seen.

Treatment

Recommended treatment includes using either an over-the-counter or prescription medicated (lice killing) product.

- Follow the product directions carefully. Directions will vary, depending on the product used.
- With certain products a second treatment is recommended 7 to 10 days later to kill any lice that may have hatched after the first treatment.
- It may take 24 hours for products to kill lice.
- Lice treatment products are not 100% effective in killing lice, especially nits.
- Removing the nits is an essential part of the treatment for controlling the spread of head lice.
- The nits are glued onto the hair shaft as they are laid and require effort to remove.
- To remove the nits, use a metal nit comb or your fingernails to slide eggs off the hair shafts. Continue checking the head and combing hair daily for 2 weeks.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a bacterial skin infection. It usually occurs on the nose, arms, legs, or around the mouth.

Symptoms

Your child may have sores on the skin. The sores can produce a thick, golden-yellow discharge that dries, crusts, and sticks to the skin. It usually begins at a break in the skin. It could start near a cut or insect bite.

Spread

By touching the fluid from sores

Incubation Period

If your child is infected, it may take 1 to 10 days for symptoms to start.

Contagious Period

Until sores are healed or the person has been treated for at least 24 hours.

Exclusion from School

Until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and sores are drying or improving.

Treatment

Impetigo can be treated with topical antibiotics (applied directly to the skin) when only a few sores are present. Oral or injectable antibiotics may also be prescribed.

Influenza

Influenza is a common viral respiratory infection. Influenza is not "stomach flu", a term used by some to describe illnesses causing vomiting or diarrhea.

Symptoms

Your child may have chills, body aches, fever, and headache. Your child may also have a cough, runny or stuffy nose, and sore throat.

Spread

- By coughing and sneezing.
- By touching contaminated hands, objects, or surfaces.

Incubation Period

If your child has been infected, it may take 1 to 4 days (usually 2 days) for symptoms to start.

Contagious Period

During the 24 hours before and up to 7 days after the illness begins.

Exclusion from School

Until 24 hours after fever is gone and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.

Treatment

Antiviral medications can shorten the course of illness if given within 36 to 48 hours after the symptoms begin. Influenza is a viral illness; therefore, antibiotics will not be effective. **DO NOT GIVE ANTIBIOTICS.**

Mononucleosis

Mononucleosis (mono) is often seen in high school and college students. About 50% of those infected will develop symptoms of infectious mononucleosis.

Symptoms

Fever, sore throat, swollen glands (especially behind the neck), headache, tiredness, and sometimes a rash. Mono can last up to several weeks. It may take weeks to months to regain energy; however, this will vary from person to person.

Spread

From person-to-person through saliva. Spread can occur by kissing or sharing items contaminated with saliva. Since this virus does not live long on surfaces and objects, you need to be exposed to fresh saliva to become infected.

Incubation Period

It takes about 4 to 6 weeks from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin.

Contagious Period

From many weeks to a year or more.

Exclusion from School

None, as long as the child is able to participate in routine activities. Because students and adults can have the virus without any symptoms and can be contagious for such a long time, exclusion will not prevent spread. Contact sports should be avoided until the student is recovered fully and the spleen is no longer palpable.

Treatment

May include bed rest, drinking plenty of water, restriction on lifting heavy objects or vigorous exercise, including contact sports.

Pertussis

Pertussis (whooping cough) can be a serious bacterial illness especially in young, unvaccinated children.

Symptoms

Your child may first have a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly fever. After 1 or 2 weeks, your child may cough in explosive bursts. These coughing attacks can end in vomiting and/or in a high-pitched whoop. Coughing attacks occur most often at night. This may last up to three months.

Spread

By coughing or sneezing.

Incubation Period

If your child has been infected, it may take 4 to 21 days (usually 7 to 10 days) for symptoms to start.

Contagious Period

From the time of the first cold-like symptoms until 21 days after coughing begins. Antibiotics shorten the time a child with pertussis can give it to others.

Exclusion from School

Until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins. During this time the person with pertussis should NOT participate in any childcare, school, or community activities. If not treated with 5 days of antibiotics, exclusion should be for 21 days after cough onset.

Treatment

Antibiotics shorten the time a person with pertussis can give it to others, but may do little to lessen their symptoms. Treatment is most effective if started soon after cough begins. Antibiotics are usually not given to people who have had a cough for more than 21 days because they will no longer be helpful.

Pinkeye

Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) is redness and inflammation of the membrane that covers the eye and lines the inner surface of the eyelid. Pinkeye is a common infection in young children.

Symptoms

Include redness, itching, pain, and drainage from the eyes. Your child may have a fever.

Spread

- By touching secretions from the eyes, nose, or mouth.
- By touching contaminated hands, objects, or surfaces.

Incubation Period

If your child is infected, it usually takes 1 to 3 days for symptoms to start.

Contagious Period

While symptoms are present.

Exclusion from School

Purulent Conjunctivitis (redness of eyes and/or eyelids with thick white or yellow eye discharge and eye pain): Until examined by a healthcare provider and approved for readmission.

Non-purulent Conjunctivitis (redness of eyes with a clear, watery eye discharge but without fever, eye pain, or eyelid redness): None, may be considered if child is unable to keep hands away from eyes.

Treatment

Antibiotic treatment (eye ointment or drops) is occasionally prescribed. If the infection appears to be viral, no specific antiviral treatment is usually needed.

Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungal infection of the body, scalp, or feet. The scalp infection is most common in children, whereas infection of the feet is more common in adolescents and adults.

Symptoms

Body

- Appears as flat, spreading, ring-shaped areas on the skin (lesions). The edge of the lesion may be dry and scaly or moist and crusted. As the lesion spreads outward, the center often becomes clear.

Scalp

- May be hard to detect in the early stages. It often begins as a small scaly patch on the scalp and may progress to larger areas of scaling. Mild redness, swelling, itching, and pustules (pus-filled) bumps may occur. Infected hairs become brittle and break off easily.

Feet

- (Also called athlete's foot.) Scaling or cracking of the skin, especially between the toes, or blisters containing thin, watery fluid may be seen. Itching is common. Serious problems can include bacterial skin infection (cellulitis) and fungal infections of the toenails.

Spread

May occur by touching the lesions of infected persons or pets (usually dogs and cats); by sharing objects that touched the lesions of an infected person, (e.g., hats, caps, combs, brushes, towels, pillows,

bedding, sofas, clothing, hair ribbons, barrettes); or have contact with skin scales containing fungi on shower stalls or floors, swimming pool decks, and locker room benches or floors.

Incubation Period

Body

- 4 to 10 days after exposure for symptoms to appear.

Scalp

- 10 to 14 days.

Feet

- Unknown.

Contagious Period

Contagious as long as lesions are present. Contagiousness is reduced once treatment has begun.

Exclusion from School

Until treatment has been started or if the lesion cannot be covered. If on the scalp, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

Treatment

Body

- Antifungal ointments are used on skin lesions for 4 weeks.

Scalp

- Medications should be taken by mouth (oral) for 4 to 8 weeks. Antifungal shampoos may also be prescribed.

Feet

- Antifungal ointments for 1 to 4 weeks. Oral medications may need to be taken for 6 to 8 weeks for severe or recurring problems.

Scabies

Scabies is an infestation caused by tiny mites that burrow and lay eggs under the skin.

Symptoms

Rash consisting of pink bumps or tiny blisters and intense itching, which may be more severe at night. Frequently only scratch marks can be seen. Common locations to see the rash are folds of skin between fingers, around wrists and elbows, and armpits. Other areas where rash may appear are knees, waist, thighs, genital area, abdomen, chest, breasts, and lower portion of buttocks. Infants and young children may be infested on head, neck, palms, and soles of feet.

Spread

By frequent or prolonged direct contact with the skin of a person with scabies or by sharing bedding, towels, or underclothing of a person with scabies. Mites cannot survive off the human body for more than 3 days and cannot reproduce off the body.

Incubation Period

It takes 2 to 6 weeks from the time a person is exposed until symptoms appear. Symptoms may appear in 1 to 4 days if the person has had scabies before.

Contagious Period

From the time a person acquires the mites (before the rash appears) until 24 hours after treatment begins.

Exclusion from School

Until 24 hours after treatment begins.

Treatment

The healthcare provider will prescribe a medication, usually a cream or lotion. Permethrin 5% is the drug of choice. There are several other prescription scabicides. Directions must be followed carefully. Itching and rash may not go away immediately after treatment. It often takes 2 to 3 weeks for rash and itching to go away. It is recommended that household members are treated, particularly those with prolonged direct skin-to-skin contact.

Shingles

Shingles (zoster) is caused by the varicella-zoster virus that remains inactive (dormant) in the body of people who have had chickenpox (varicella). You get shingles from your own chickenpox virus, not from someone else. This usually occurs when the immune system is weakened for various reasons, including certain illnesses or conditions, or treatments, or aging. Although shingles usually occurs in adulthood, children who were infected with varicella in utero or during infancy may develop shingles during childhood.

Symptoms

Severe pain, itching, and numbness along certain nerve pathways, commonly involving one side of the body. About 1 to 3 days later, a red rash appears at the site. Clusters of blisters appear soon after, usually on one side of the body and closer together than in chickenpox. The blisters dry out and crust over within a few days. The rash and pain usually disappear within 3 to 5 weeks. Shingles is a milder illness in children than in adults, but it can be a serious illness in those who have weakened immune systems.

Spread

A person must have already had chickenpox disease in the past to develop shingles. Shingles does not spread from one person to another as shingles. When people who have not had chickenpox have contact with the fluid from the shingles blisters, they can develop chickenpox.

Incubation Period

None.

Contagious Period

In an otherwise healthy person, from the start of the rash until all the blisters have crusted.

Exclusion from School

None, if blisters can be completely covered by clothing or a bandage. If blisters cannot be covered, exclude until the blisters have crusted. Persons with severe, disseminated shingles should be excluded regardless of whether the sores can be covered.

Treatment

Antiviral medications may be prescribed.

Strep Throat

Strep throat and a strep throat with a rash (scarlet fever) are common bacterial infections in children.

Symptoms

- Strep throat - Your child may have a fever that starts suddenly, red sore throat, and swollen glands. Headache may occur. Children may have stomach pain and vomiting.
- Scarlet fever - Rarely, a very fine raised rash appears at the same time as the throat soreness. The rash feels like sandpaper. The rash is most often on the neck, chest, elbow, and groin and in the inner thigh and folds of the armpit. Later on, the skin on the fingertips and toes may peel.

Spread

By coughing or sneezing.

Incubation Period

It usually takes 2 to 5 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms start.

Contagious Period

Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

Exclusion from School

Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and the child is without fever.

reatment

Oral or injectable antibiotics may be prescribed. treatment may be dependent on how severe the infection is and will help prevent more serious illness such as rheumatic fever.