

# HEALTH BULLETIN    Chickenpox (varicella-zoster virus)

<b>Symptoms:</b>	Sudden onset of a mild fever and an itchy rash that starts with small, red bumps that become blistery, oozy, and then crust over.
<b>How It Is Spread:</b>	Chickenpox is spread through exposure of infected fluids from the nose, throat, or skin rash of someone with chickenpox. This can occur either by sharing that person's breathing space, or by directly touching the infected fluids from the skin.
<b>Incubation:</b>	Usually 14-16 days after contact.
<b>Communicable Period:</b>	Until all blisters have scabs and no new blisters are forming.
<b>Control:</b>	Provide information to the school regarding the nature of the condition. Exclude your child from school until the skin rash has crusted over.
<b>Suggested Treatment:</b>	Control fever with acetaminophen. Cut nails short to prevent scratching. Calamine lotion, baking soda or tepid baths with oatmeal or baking soda may reduce itching. <b><i>Do not use ASA or Aspirin containing products. There is a possible association between the use of aspirin and a very rare but serious disease called Reye's Syndrome (vomiting associated with liver problems and coma).</i></b>
<b>Prevention:</b>	<p>Use good handwashing and surface sanitation techniques at all times, particularly after contact with soiled articles or blisters. Prevent contact with other people in the family who have not had it and pregnant women or people whose immunity may be reduced due to disease or drug/radiation therapy. Those with reduced immune response who are exposed should contact their physician immediately.</p> <p>The Immunization Practices Advisory Committee of the U.S. Public Health Service recommends a routine single dose varicella (chickenpox) vaccination for all healthy children between 12-18 months. A single dose vaccination is also recommended for children 18 months to 12 years who have not had chickenpox or who have an undocumented health history.</p>
<b>References:</b>	<p>American Academy of Pediatrics, Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools © 2010 <a href="http://www.aap.org">www.aap.org</a></p> <p>Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <a href="http://www.cdc.gov">www.cdc.gov</a></p>

