

## Chickenpox (Varicella-Zoster Infections)

What is chickenpox?

Chickenpox is a highly contagious illness with rash and fever caused by the varicella-zoster virus

Signs and Symptoms to watch for:

- Rash – presents as small, red spots and bumps blistering over 3 to 4 days sometimes with white heads to them, then forming scabs.
- Blister crops will come out over several days, so you will see various stages of chickenpox for more than a day (i.e., red bumps, blisters and scabbed over blisters all at the same time).
- Rash is more noticeable on the trunk of the body. Rash may appear inside the mouth, ears, genital areas, and scalp.
- Fever, runny nose, and cough.

Incubation and Contagious Periods:

- Incubation Period: usually 14 to 16 days, may be as short as 10 days or as long as 21 days.
- Contagious Period: most contagious period is when the rash is spreading; and may be contagious a day before the rash appears. When all blisters have scabs and no new blisters are forming the child will no longer spread the virus.

Spreading of Chickenpox:

- Chickenpox is HIGHLY contagious through the air via mouth by coughing/sneezing or nose droplets. Even brief exposure poses a high risk of infection for people who have not had the disease or the chickenpox vaccine.
- Direct contact with the fluid inside the blisters of an infected person, or to a lesser extent, from mucus from the eyes, nose, or mouth.

Exclusion from School:

- Any child presenting with signs and symptoms of Chickenpox is excluded from school until all blisters have scabs (usually 6 days after start of rash).
- Contact your District Nurse if you have any further questions, 303-772-7700.

Immunizations:

- Click on Immunization Link below for further information regarding school requirements. First link is in English and second link is in Spanish.
- <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/combine1new.pdf>
- <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/combine5new.pdf>

Click on these websites for more information on Chickenpox.

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/list\\_varicel.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/list_varicel.htm)

<http://www.edcp.org/factsheets/chickpox.cfm>

12/10/10