

CHICKENPOX

Chickenpox (Varicella) is caused by a virus that is spread through the air. It is very contagious and children usually develop the rash 10 – 20 days after they are exposed.

Children with chickenpox may have fever, nasal congestion, runny noses, or tiredness before they develop the rash. The rash may change quickly from a red bump to a blister to a crusted scab-like sore. Most children with chickenpox have an itchy rash. The rash may be seen anywhere on the body including around the eyes, in the mouth, and in the genitalia.

Children who have received the chickenpox vaccine may still develop chickenpox – but they will usually have a much milder case with less of a rash. The vaccine protects your child from the more serious complications that can occur with chickenpox.

Here are some ways you can help your child feel more comfortable:

1. If your child has a fever and is uncomfortable you can use acetaminophen (Tylenol, Panadol) to treat the fever.

+DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN, MOTRIN, or ADVIL to a child who has chickenpox.

+Your child may fight the infection better if you do not use acetaminophen – so only give this if your child is uncomfortable or fussy.

2. To help with the itching, you can:

- a. Give your child a bath with Aveeno or any oatmeal containing skin care product

as this may help soothe the skin. (Baking soda in the bath water may also help)

- b. Place Calomine lotion or oatmeal containing lotions on the skin (Do not use Calydryl lotion or other lotions containing Benadryl as this may cause your child to have an allergic reaction later on)

- c. Use an anti-itching medicine (antihistamine) like Benadryl if your child is not helped by the baths and lotions. Contact your pediatrician for correct dose.

- d. Trim your child's fingernails to help decrease infections and scarring.

Please call your doctor if any of the following occur:

1. Your child has a fever for more than 3 days
2. The area around the chickenpox sores becomes red or is oozing
3. Your child complains of an earache or has difficulty breathing
4. Your child has chickenpox sores on her eyes
5. Your child has difficulty with balance

6. Your child is not acting normally, is not smiling or playing
7. Your child is not able to drink liquids or is vomiting

Your child is no longer contagious when all the lesions have crusts (scabs) on them.
Your child may then return to daycare or school.

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