

Chickenpox

What you should know



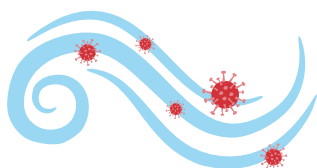
The varicella-zoster virus causes chickenpox.

Symptoms:

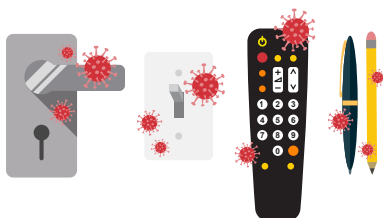
- Blister-like rash.
- Fever.
- Headache.
- Tiredness.
- Loss of appetite.



Chickenpox spreads easily:

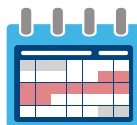


- Through the air.



- On surfaces.

People can spread chickenpox 1–2 days before they get a rash until all the blisters form scabs.



Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent chickenpox.

Unvaccinated people should:

- Avoid people with chickenpox and places where outbreaks are happening.
- Frequently wash hands with soap and warm water.



Chickenpox can be dangerous for people who are:



- Infants.
- Pregnant.
- Teens.
- Living with a weakened immune system.
- Adults.

It can cause brain infections, pneumonia, or birth defects.

If these people are exposed to chickenpox, call a healthcare provider right away.



Unvaccinated and exposed? Get vaccine within 3–5 days to prevent or reduce illness.

If you get sick:

- Rest.
- Drink fluids.
- Treat fever and discomfort, as needed. Never give aspirin to children.



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Frequently asked questions

Is chickenpox vaccine new?

No. Children in the United States began to get chickenpox vaccine in 1995. Since then, cases of chickenpox have decreased by 97%. Dozens of countries recommend chickenpox vaccine for children because getting the vaccine is much safer than getting the disease.

What are the side effects of chickenpox vaccine?

The most common side effects are injection site soreness, pain, redness, and swelling. These typically resolve within days.

Why do we need chickenpox vaccine?

Most children who get chickenpox recover after a mild illness. But serious illness can happen. Chickenpox can cause brain infection, pneumonia, blood stream infection, and birth defects.

Before vaccine became available, about 4 million people in the United States got chickenpox each year—more than 10,000 went to the hospital and more than 100 died.

Who is most at risk for serious illness from chickenpox?

Serious illness from chickenpox is most common in people who are unimmune (not vaccinated and never had the disease), especially infants, teens, adults, and those who are pregnant or have weakened immune systems.

When should people get chickenpox vaccine?

Washington requires children to receive chickenpox vaccine before they enter school or childcare.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends children get a dose of chickenpox vaccine at 12 months old and a second dose at 4–6 years old.

People 7 years or older who are unimmune can get 2 doses of vaccine.

People who are unimmune and exposed to chickenpox can get vaccine within 3–5 days to prevent or reduce illness.

People born before 1980 are considered immune because they likely had the disease.

How do I know if my child has gotten chickenpox vaccine?

Find your child's immunization record at myirmobile.com or contact your child's healthcare provider.

Where can my child get chickenpox vaccine?

Your child can get chickenpox vaccine at a healthcare provider's office or a pharmacy. Find other free vaccine locations at tpchd.org/kidsvax.

Is there medicine for chickenpox?

Most people who get chickenpox will only need to treat fever and discomfort. Never give aspirin to children.

Some people are at high risk for serious illness from chickenpox: infants, teens, adults, and those who are pregnant or have a weakened immune system. If these people are exposed to chickenpox, call a healthcare provider right away. The healthcare provider may prescribe antiviral medication.