

Disease Information

Chickenpox <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/PreventChickenpox/>

Chickenpox is a very contagious disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). It causes a blister-like rash, itching, tiredness, and fever. Chickenpox can be serious, especially in babies, adults, and people with weakened immune systems. It spreads easily from infected people to others who have never had chickenpox or received the chickenpox vaccine. Chickenpox spreads in the air through coughing or sneezing. It can also be spread by touching or breathing in the virus particles that come from chickenpox blisters.

If you have never had chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, typical symptoms are:

- high fever
- blister-like rash with severe itching all over the body
- loss of appetite
- fatigue

It is possible for people who have been vaccinated against chickenpox still to get the disease. However, the symptoms are usually mild, with few blisters and a low or no fever.

Conjunctivitis <http://www.cdc.gov/conjunctivitis/>

Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the outermost layer of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids. When caused by allergens it is not contagious; however, viral and bacterial conjunctivitis can be easily spread from person to person. There are some simple steps you can take to help limit the spread of viral and bacterial conjunctivitis:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes.
- Wash any discharge from around the eyes several times a day.
- Wash hands after applying eye drops or ointment.
- Wash pillowcases, sheets, washcloths, and towels in hot water and detergent. Hands should be washed after handling such items.

Dengue fever <http://www.cdc.gov/dengue/Symptoms/index.html>

The principal symptoms of dengue fever are:

- High fever and at least two of the following:

- Severe headache
- Severe eye pain (behind eyes)
- Joint pain
- Muscle and/or bone pain
- Rash
- Mild bleeding manifestation (e.g., nose or gum bleed, petechiae, or easy bruising)
- Low white cell count

Generally, younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults.

Watch for warning signs as temperature declines 3 to 7 days after symptoms began. Go **IMMEDIATELY** to an emergency room or the closest health care provider if any of the following warning signs appear:

- Severe abdominal pain or persistent vomiting
- Red spots or patches on the skin
- Bleeding from nose or gums
- Vomiting blood
- Black, tarry stools (faeces, excrement)
- Drowsiness or irritability
- Pale, cold, or clammy skin
- Difficulty breathing

Enterovirus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease) <http://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/index.html>

Enterovirus, or hand, foot, and mouth disease, is a common viral illness that usually affects infants and children younger than 5 years old. However, it can sometimes occur in adults. Symptoms of hand, foot, and mouth disease include fever, mouth sores, and a skin rash.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is spread from person to person through nose and throat secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus), blister fluid, or stool of infected persons. You can lower your risk of being infected by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water
- Disinfecting dirty surfaces and soiled items
- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with infected persons

Hand, food, and mouth disease usually starts with a fever, poor appetite, a vague feeling of being unwell (malaise), and sore throat. One or two days after a fever starts, painful sores usually develop in the mouth (herpangina). They begin as small red spots that blister and that often become ulcers. The sores are often in the back of the mouth. A skin rash develops over 1 to 2 days. The rash has flat or raised red spots, sometimes

with blisters. The rash is usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet; it may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area.

Persons infected with the viruses that cause the disease may not experience all of the symptoms. They may only get the mouth sores or skin rash.

There is no vaccine to protect against these viruses.

If a person has mouth sores, it might be painful to swallow. However, drinking liquids is important to stay hydrated. If a person cannot swallow enough liquids, they may need to be given through an IV in their vein. Children are especially vulnerable to dehydration as a result of having painful mouth sores.

If there are cases of enterovirus in the community, parents should check their child's temperature at home every morning, and if it is over 37.5 degrees, the child should stay at home.

Fifth Disease "Slapped Cheek Syndrome" <http://www.cdc.gov/parvovirusB19/fifth-disease.html>

Fifth disease got its name because it was fifth in a list of historical classifications of common skin rash illnesses in children.

Fifth disease is a mild rash illness caused by parvovirus B19. This disease is also called erythema infectiosum. It is more common in children than adults. A person usually gets sick within 4 to 14 days (sometimes up to 20 days) after getting infected with parvovirus B19. About 20% of children and adults who get infected with this virus will not have any symptoms.

The first symptoms of fifth disease are usually mild and nonspecific:

- **Fever,**
- **Runny nose, and**
- **Headache**

Next, you may get a rash on your face and body:

After several days, a red rash may appear on the face. This is called 'slapped cheek rash', and is the most recognised feature of fifth disease. It is more common in children than adults. Some people may get a second rash a few days later on their chest, back, buttocks, or arms and legs. The rash may be itchy, especially on the soles of the feet. The rash can vary in intensity and may come and go for several weeks. It usually goes away in 7 to 10 days, but it can last for several weeks. As the rash starts to go away, it may look lacy.

You may also have painful or swollen joints:

People with fifth disease can also develop pain and swelling in their joints (polyarthropathy syndrome). This is more common in adults, especially women. Some

adults with fifth disease may only have painful joints, usually in the hands, feet, or knees, with no other symptoms. The joint pain usually lasts 1 to 3 weeks, but it can last for months or longer. It usually goes away without any long-term problems.

Gastroenteritis / Diarrhoea <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/faq.htm>

Gastroenteritis means inflammation of the stomach and small and large intestines. Viral gastroenteritis is an infection caused by a variety of viruses which results in vomiting or diarrhoea. It is often called the “stomach flu,” although it is not caused by the influenza viruses.

Many different viruses can cause gastroenteritis, including rotaviruses; noroviruses (see below); adenoviruses, types 40 and 41; sapoviruses; and astroviruses. Viral gastroenteritis is not caused by bacteria or parasites or by medications or other medical conditions, although the symptoms may be similar. Your doctor can determine if the diarrhoea is caused by a virus or by something else.

The main symptoms of viral gastroenteritis are watery diarrhea and vomiting. The affected person may also have a headache, fever and abdominal cramps (stomach ache). In general, the symptoms begin 1 to 2 days following infection with a virus that causes gastroenteritis and may last for 1 to 10 days, depending on which virus causes the illness.

For more information on viruses that cause viral gastroenteritis, see

<http://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/adenovirus/hcp/index.html>

Head Lice http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/disease/head_lice.html

Head lice, or *Pediculus humanus capitis*, are parasitic insects that can be found on the head and neck and survive by feeding on human blood. Lice are spread most commonly by close person-to-person contact.

Getting head lice is not related to the cleanliness of a person or his environment; however, good hygiene is still important to help prevent and control the spread of head lice:

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities at home, school, and elsewhere (sports activities, playground, slumber parties, and camp).
- Never share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Never share combs, brushes, or towels. Disinfest combs and brushes used by an infested person by soaking them in hot water (at least 54°C) for 5-10 minutes.

- Never lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infested person.
- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that an infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using the hot water (54°C) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned OR sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.

Influenza <http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/panflu/overview.asp>

Influenza is an acute infection viral illness which spreads rapidly from person to person by close contact via the respiratory route when a person talks, coughs or sneezes. It can spread rapidly as very few people have a natural immunity. It is one of the most difficult diseases to control as it spreads via contaminated hands and faces.

Measles <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/>

Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus which normally grows in the cells that line the back of the throat and lungs.

It is so contagious that anyone who is exposed to it and is not immune will probably get the disease. Therefore, it is extremely important that children receive their vaccinations at the recommended times.

Symptoms of measles include fever, runny nose, cough and a rash all over the body. Its infectivity lasts from about two to four days before the onset of the rash until two to five days after. Measles spreads through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing.

Complications are relatively common and differ greatly in severity. They can include ear infection, pneumonia, seizures, and brain damage. Adults who catch the disease are more prone to serious complications. Measles can also make a pregnant woman have a miscarriage or give birth prematurely.

Mumps <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/>

Mumps is a contagious disease that is caused by the mumps virus. Mumps typically starts with a few days of fever; headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite, and is followed by swelling of salivary glands. Anyone who is not immune from either previous mumps infection or from vaccination can get mumps.

Mumps has not disappeared in Taiwan, and the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is the best way to prevent the disease.

- Check your child's immunisation record or contact the doctor to see whether your child has already received the MMR vaccine.

- Get your child vaccinated on time: visit the immunisation scheduler for newborn to 6-year-old children.
- Remember that some older children and adults also need the MMR vaccine.
- Recognise the signs and symptoms of mumps.
- Report suspect mumps cases to your doctor right away.

Noroviruses (see also Gastroenteritis above)

<http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/norovirus.html>

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause gastroenteritis in people. Gastroenteritis is an inflammation of the lining of the stomach and intestines, causing an acute onset of severe vomiting and diarrhoea.

The symptoms of norovirus illness usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and some stomach cramping. Sometimes people also have a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. People may suddenly feel very sick and vomit frequently or have several episodes of diarrhoea, but most people get better within 1 or 2 days and they have no long-term health effects related to their illness. Diarrhoea is more common in children and vomiting is more common in adults.

In some cases, people are unable to drink enough liquids to replace the liquids they have lost because of frequent vomiting and diarrhoea. This is called dehydration: the loss of a great deal of water from the body. Symptoms of dehydration include decreased urination, dry mouth and throat, and dizziness when standing up.

Rubella / German Measles <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Rubella/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/rubella/downloads/PL-dis-rubella-bw-office.pdf>

Rubella, sometimes called German Measles, is a disease caused by a virus. The infection is usually mild with fever and rash. If a pregnant mother gets infected, the virus can also cause serious birth defects. The MMR vaccine protects against rubella.

Rubella usually causes the following symptoms in children:

- A rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body
- A low fever (less than 38 °C)

These symptoms last two to three days.

Older children and adults may have swollen glands and symptoms like a cold before the rash appears. Aching joints occur in many cases, especially among women.

Scabies <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/>

Human scabies is caused by an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*). The microscopic scabies mite burrows into the upper layer of the skin where it lives and lays its eggs. The most common symptoms of scabies are intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash. The scabies mite is usually spread by direct, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies.

When a person is infested with scabies mites for the first time, symptoms usually do not appear for up to two months (2-6 weeks) after being infected; however, an infested person still can spread scabies during this time even though he/she does not have any symptoms.

If a person had had scabies before, symptoms appear much sooner (1-4 days) after exposure. An infested person can transmit scabies, even if they do not have symptoms, until they are successfully treated and the mites and eggs are destroyed.

Common Symptoms

The most common symptoms of scabies, itching and a skin rash, are caused by sensitisation (a type of “allergic” reaction) to the proteins and feces of the parasite. Severe itching (pruritus), especially at night, is the earliest and most common symptom of scabies. A pimple – like (papular) itchy (pruritic) “scabies rash” is also common. Itching and rash may affect much of the body or be limited to common sites such as:

- Between the fingers
- Wrist
- Elbow
- Armpit
- Penis
- Nipple
- Waist
- Buttocks
- Shoulder blades

The head, face, neck, palms, and soles often are involved in infants and very young children, but usually not adults or older children.

Scarlet Fever (strep throat) <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/ScarletFever/>

Scarlet fever results from group A strep infection. If your child has a sore throat and rash, their doctor can test for strep. Prompt treatment with antibiotics can protect a child from possible complications.

Not as common as it once was, scarlet fever – scarlatina – is a bacterial infection caused by group A Streptococcus or “group A strep.” This illness affects a small percentage of people who have strep throat or, less commonly, a streptococcal (type of bacterial) skin infection. Scarlet fever is treatable with antibiotics and usually is a mild illness, but it needs to be treated to prevent rare but serious complications.

Common symptoms of Scarlet Fever:

- A very red, sore throat
- A fever (38 °C or above)
- A red rash with a sandpaper feel
- Bright red underarm, elbow and groin skin creases
- A whitish coating on the tongue or back of the throat
- A “strawberry” tongue
- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Swollen glands
- Body aches

The best way to keep from getting infected is to wash your hands often and avoid sharing eating utensils, linens, towels or other personal items. It is especially important for anyone with a sore throat to wash his or her hands often.