Information for parents about the disease

VARICELLA

CHICKENPOX can be a serious disease... ¹,²

Information for parents about the disease
What causes chickenpox?

Chickenpox is caused by a virus, the varicella-zoster virus.¹²

What are the symptoms of chickenpox?

The most common symptoms of chickenpox are an itchy rash with small blisters, fever, tiredness, headache, and loss of appetite. The rash usually develops on the scalp and body, and then spreads to the face, arms, and legs. The illness lasts about 5–10 days.¹²
How does chickenpox spread?

The chickenpox virus spreads

- through air by **coughing** and **sneezing**\(^1,2\)
- by direct contact with the fluid from \(^1,2\)
  - a blister of a person infected with chickenpox \(^1,2\)
  - a sore from a person with shingles \(^1,2\)

How long does it take for my baby/child to show signs of chickenpox after being exposed?

- It takes from **10 to 21 days** for a baby/child to develop symptoms after being exposed to a person infected with chickenpox \(^1,2\).
- In addition, a person with chickenpox can spread the disease from **1 to 2 days** before they get the rash until all their chickenpox blisters have formed scabs \(^1\).
How serious is chickenpox for my baby/child?

Most children with chickenpox completely recover in a week. However, the itching can be very uncomfortable.\(^1,2\)

Children with chickenpox miss several days of school or child care.\(^1,2\)

The disease can also cause serious problems, including:

- **Bacterial infection of the skin, that can lead to scarring**\(^1,2\)
- **Dehydration**\(^1,2\) (loss of body fluids)
- **Pneumonia**\(^1,2\) (lung infection)
- **Encephalitis**\(^1,2\) (brain swelling)

Some kids may need hospital care. **Chickenpox can even be deadly.**\(^2\)
Complications are more common in some children with weakened immune systems.¹
What is the chickenpox vaccine?

The chickenpox vaccine protects against chickenpox. It is made from weakened varicella virus that protects children by preparing their bodies to fight the virus. Some vaccinated people still get chickenpox, but they usually have a very mild case. They get well quickly.

Why should my child be vaccinated against chickenpox?

The chickenpox vaccine protects against an uncomfortable and sometimes serious disease.

Are chickenpox vaccines well tolerated?

The chickenpox vaccines are generally well tolerated. Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Possible side effects are usually mild. Common side effects may include soreness at the injection site, fever and a mild rash. Serious side effects are generally very rare.
Chickenpox is a vaccine preventable disease.

What can I do to protect my child from chickenpox, if my child has not been vaccinated?

- Avoid contact of your child with an individual infected with chickenpox.¹
- Talk with your doctor today to check whether vaccination is appropriate for your child.
Talk to your doctor today about ways to prevent chickenpox.

References:

If you experience any side effects with GSK products, please report the case to GSK (Malta) Limited, 1, De la Cruz Avenue, Qormi QRM 2458, Malta (Tel: +356 21238131). If you have questions about a specific medical condition, please consult a healthcare professional.

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