

CHICKEN POX

School _____

Date _____

Dear Parent/Guardian,

A case of Chicken Pox has been reported at school. The following information is for your reference.

Chicken Pox is caused by a virus and is spread from person to person through direct contact with the chicken pox rash of an infected person, or by respiratory droplets expelled when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. It may take from 10 to 21 days after exposure to an infected person for the illness to appear. (commonly 14-17 days)

Fever and rash can appear first on head and then spread to body. Usually two or three crops of new blisters that heals, sometimes leaving scabs.

A person with Chicken Pox is considered contagious for 1 to 2 days prior to the onset of the rash and for about 5 days after the rash appears. When all the blisters have scabbed over, with no new lesions occurring, the child may return to school.

The treatment for Chicken Pox consists of measures to make the victim comfortable. Avoid overheating and sweating. Use cold compresses or tepid baths to reduce the itching. Acetaminophen may be given to reduce fever or relieve symptoms. **Avoid giving your child aspirin or products containing aspirin** as use of aspirin containing drugs during a viral episode has been linked to **Reyes Syndrome**, a potentially fatal illness.

A vaccine to prevent Chicken Pox is available and required for specific ages according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Breakthrough cases of Chicken Pox disease have been documented in children who have had the immunization. Disease in vaccinated children can be mild or absent of fever with few lesions, which might not be blister-like. The vaccine is 95% effective in preventing moderate or severe disease. Exclusion from school is the same as previously discussed.

Consult your physician with any questions and concerns. And any pregnant woman who have been exposed should consult their physician.

If your child contracts Chicken Pox, please notify the school. Contact your physician immediately if your child has difficulty walking or shows mental changes during or following illness with Chicken Pox.

Sincerely,

References: 2013 Texas Department of State Health Services
American Academy of Pediatrics