

## How do we prevent Chickenpox?

### The best way to prevent chickenpox is to get the Chickenpox vaccine.

Everyone—including children, adolescents, and adults—should get the Chickenpox vaccine if they have never had Chickenpox or were never vaccinated.

Chickenpox vaccine is very safe and effective at preventing the disease. Most people who get the vaccine will not get Chickenpox. If a vaccinated person does get chickenpox, the symptoms are usually milder with fewer or no blisters (they may have just red spots) and low or no fever.

The Chickenpox vaccine is available at Panaga Health.

## Is there any home treatment for people with Chickenpox?

There are several things that you can do at home to help relieve chickenpox symptoms and prevent skin infections:

- Take Paracetamol if there is fever.
- Calamine lotion and a cool bath with added baking soda, uncooked oatmeal, or colloidal oatmeal may help relieve some of the itching.
- Maintain good personal hygiene by bathing/showering each day. Try to keep fingernails trimmed short and minimize scratching to prevent the virus from spreading to others and to help prevent skin infections. If you do scratch a blister by accident, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Any signs of worsening of symptoms to seek consultation with a doctor.



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# Chickenpox

## What is Chickenpox?

Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease, caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV).

Onset is sudden with mild fever, malaise and a characteristic itchy vesicular rash. Successive crops of lesions can appear with several stages of maturity before drying to a granular scab after three to five days.

### Transmission:

- via direct contact
- via- droplet and
- airborne spread of vesicle fluid or secretions of respiratory tract.



### Incubation periods:

10 to 21 days - It may prolong as long as 28 days after exposure for those who have no immunity to Chickenpox.

### Signs and Symptoms:

The classic symptom of Chickenpox is a rash that turns into itchy, fluid-filled blisters that eventually turn into scabs. The rash may first show up on the chest, back, and face, and then spread over the entire body, including inside the mouth, eyelids, or genital area. It usually takes about one week for all of the blisters to become scabs.

Other typical symptoms that may begin to appear one to two days before rash include:

- fever
- tiredness
- loss of appetite
- headache

### Period of communicability:

Usually 1 to 2 days before onset of rash and continuing until all lesions are crusted - usually 5 days.

### Individuals most at risk:

- Those not previously infected or vaccinated.
- Babies whose mothers are not immune or at time of delivery develops chickenpox.
- Patients with leukemia may suffer severe, prolonged or fatal chickenpox.
- People with weakened immune systems (lowered ability to fight germs and sickness).
- A more severe disease in adults.
- Pregnant women who develop chicken pox- can cause serious disease in the fetus in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy.

