

Chickenpox

Chickenpox is a mild and common childhood illness that most children catch at some point.



Some children have only a few spots, but in others they can cover the entire body. The spots are most likely to appear on the face, ears and scalp, under the arms, on the chest and belly and on the arms and legs.

Treatment

Chickenpox in children is considered a mild illness, but expect your child to feel pretty miserable and irritable while they have it.

Your child is likely to have a fever at least for the first few days of the illness. The spots can be incredibly itchy.

There is no specific treatment for chickenpox, but there are pharmacy remedies which can help with symptoms, such as paracetamol to relieve fever and calamine lotion and cooling gels to ease itching.

In most children, the blisters crust up and fall off naturally within one to two weeks.

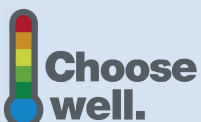
If you experience these mild symptoms after a knock, bump or blow to the head, you do not need medical attention.

What to do

To prevent spreading the infection, keep children off nursery or school until all the spots have crusted over. Chickenpox is most infectious from one to two days before the rash starts, until all the blisters have crusted over (usually five to six days after the start of the rash). If your child has chickenpox, try to keep them away from public areas to avoid contact with people who have not had it, especially people who are at risk of serious problems, such as newborn babies, pregnant women and anyone with a weakened immune system (for example, people having cancer treatment or taking steroid tablets).

Can you get it more than once?

Yes. Around 90% of people will get chickenpox at some point, usually during childhood, and most of these people will develop an immunity. Around one in eight people with chickenpox report that they've had it at least once before, so it is possible to get chickenpox again.



For more information, help and support go to www.choosewellmanchester.org.uk or visit NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk

Choose the right care

What to do next...



Choose care at home if...

- Your child has chickenpox with no other complications
- For most children, chickenpox is a mild illness that gets better on its own.
- Keep your child off school for five days after the rash begins
- Keep your child away from anyone with reduced immunity and pregnant women who haven't had chickenpox
- If in doubt, you can call your GP or the NHS 111 service for advice



Choose your Pharmacy or GP if...

- Your child has a fever - ask your pharmacist about paracetamol for children
- Your child's blisters are very itchy - ask your pharmacist about calamine lotion or other over-the-counter remedies to help with the itching
- The blisters on their skin become infected - contact your GP straight away
- Your child has a pain in their chest or has difficulty breathing - contact your GP straight away and let them know it's urgent



Call 999 A&E if...

- There are no reasons why you should need to go to A&E for problems with Chickenpox
- A&E is for urgent, life-threatening illness and injury



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