



ROCKY POINT UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
JOSEPH A. EDGAR INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

525 Route 25A
Rocky Point, New York 11778

Telephone: (631) 744-1602

Fax: (631) 744-8909

Dr. Scott O'Brien
Superintendent of Schools

Linda Murphy, Principal
Dr. Courtney Herbert, Assistant Principal

October 18, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Chicken pox (varicella) has been reported in our school. It is possible to get the disease even if you have been vaccinated. Below is a description of the virus. If you have any questions regarding the virus, please contact your physician or the Health Office at X-7410.

What is chickenpox? Chickenpox is a highly communicable disease caused by the varicella virus, a member of the herpes virus family. In temperate climates, chickenpox occurs most frequently in winter and early spring.

Who gets chickenpox? Chickenpox is common in the United States. Virtually everyone who is not vaccinated acquires chickenpox by adulthood. Cases are expected to decline as vaccine coverage levels increase.

How is chickenpox spread? Chickenpox is transmitted to others by direct person-to-person contact, by droplet or airborne spread of discharges from an infected person's nose and throat or indirectly by contact with articles freshly soiled by discharges from the infected person's lesions. The scabs themselves are not considered infectious.

What are the symptoms of chickenpox? Initial symptoms include sudden onset of slight fever and feeling tired and weak. These are soon followed by an itchy blister-like rash. The blisters eventually dry, crust over and form scabs. The blisters tend to be more common on covered than on exposed parts of the body. They may appear on the scalp, armpits, trunk and even on the eyelids and in the mouth. Mild or unapparent infections occasionally occur in children. The disease is usually more serious in adults than in children.

How soon do symptoms appear? Symptoms commonly appear 14-16 days (range of 10-21 days) after exposure to someone with chickenpox or herpes zoster (shingles).

When and for how long is a person able to spread chickenpox? A person is most able to transmit chickenpox from one to two days before the onset of rash until all lesions have crusted. People who are immunocompromised may be contagious for a longer period of time.

Does past infection with chickenpox make a person immune? Chickenpox generally results in lifelong immunity. However, this infection may remain hidden and recur years later as shingles in a proportion of older adults and sometimes in children.

Sincerely,

The Health Office Staff