

Emergency Department Chicken Pox

General Information

Chicken Pox is an infection that causes itchy, red bumps to form on your skin. It is caused by a virus called the varicella-zoster virus. It takes about 2 weeks after being exposed to chickenpox before the rash appears. The most common symptoms are rash, fever, abdominal pain, and a general unwell feeling. The rash starts out as small itchy red bumps that quickly develop blisters. They may appear almost anywhere on the body, including the mouth, throat and whites of the eyes. The blisters break open then scabs form. The rash lasts about 1 week. Chickenpox is contagious from the time of exposure until all the sores have crusted over.

Instructions

1. The doctor may prescribe you anti-viral medication. Take as directed.
2. Use acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (i.e. Advil) to help with fever and discomfort.
3. There are creams and ointments available to help relieve itching. See a pharmacist for information, and follow package instructions.
4. Do not scratch the rash or pick off the scabs.

See Your Family Doctor if Any of the Following Develop:

- Temperature over 39°C, unrelieved by Tylenol or Advil
- Sores that look infected (red, warm or tender)
- The rash spread to one or both eyes
- Have a bad headache
- Have trouble looking at bright lights
- Develop a bad cough
- Vomiting (throwing up)

Return to Emergency if Any of the Following Develop:

- Have difficulty walking
- Seem confused
- Have a stiff neck
- Have trouble breathing

For more information or questions contact HealthLinkBC at 811.

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