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# THINGS PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHICKENPOX

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## Chickenpox is not a childhood rite of passage

Chickenpox is a common infectious disease that leaves your child feeling very itchy and miserable.<sup>1</sup> While it's usually mild, for some, it can lead to serious complications such as skin and lung infections.<sup>2,3</sup>

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## Spot the signs

Chickenpox is an itchy blister-like rash which usually lasts about 4–7 days.<sup>4</sup> The infection is spread in the fluid found in the blisters and from close contact with someone with chickenpox.<sup>1</sup> The illness usually starts with one to two days of fever, aches and pains and feeling out of sorts.<sup>1,2</sup> That means no school or nursery until the last blister has scabbed over, so they may need five days at home.<sup>1,5</sup>



Scan the QR  
code with  
your phone  
to visit

[chickenpoxaware.ie](http://chickenpoxaware.ie)

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### Don't pass it on

Because chickenpox is highly contagious, you should try to prevent spreading it by staying home and avoiding contact with others, particularly those at higher risk of complications, such as pregnant women, newborn babies and people with weakened immune systems.<sup>5</sup>

#### References

1. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/chickenpox/> accessed March 2023
2. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines/chapter23.pdf>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/about/complications.html>
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/about/symptoms.html>
5. <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/chickenpox?>

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### Treating and Preventing Chickenpox

There is no cure for chickenpox and the virus usually clears up by itself without any treatment.<sup>1</sup> Your pharmacist can advise about medicines that may help relieve itching or reduce pain and discomfort.

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### When to contact your GP

Contact your GP, Practice Nurse or Pharmacist if <sup>5</sup>:

- You're exposed to chickenpox while pregnant
- Your baby gets chickenpox when they're less than 4 weeks old
- You see signs of complications
- The symptoms haven't started to improve after six days

