

Varicella

Definition: Varicella (chickenpox) is a highly contagious disease that is very uncomfortable and sometimes serious. Chickenpox is a disease caused by the varicella zoster virus. It causes a rash and fever and can be serious, especially for babies, adolescents, adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. The chickenpox vaccine protects against this disease

Transmission: Chickenpox spreads easily through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread by touching fluid from blisters. Children with chickenpox usually must miss school or child care for at least a week to avoid spreading the virus to others. If a person vaccinated for chickenpox gets the disease, they can still spread it to others.

Symptoms: Chickenpox causes a rash of itchy blisters. It starts on the face, chest, back, and stomach. A person can have 250 to 500 blisters. The rash can spread over the whole body, even inside the mouth. Chickenpox also causes fever, headache, and tiredness. People are usually sick for 5 to 10 days.

You can still get chickenpox if you have been vaccinated against the disease. But, it is usually milder with less than 50 blisters and little or no fever.

Exposure: It is spread by droplets through the air

Precautions and PPE considerations: Gloves and masks are preferred. The pt should also be masked during transport. Use the vent fan to increase circulation.

Treatments: The chickenpox vaccine is the best protection against chickenpox. The vaccine is made from weakened varicella virus that produces an immune response in your body that protects you against chickenpox. The chickenpox vaccine was licensed for use in the United States in 1995. Since then, the vaccine has become widely used. Thanks to the chickenpox vaccine, the numbers of people who get chickenpox each year as well as hospitalizations and deaths from chickenpox have gone down dramatically in the United States

Work Guidelines: Personnel with active chickenpox are to be excluded from duty until all lesions dry and crust and no new lesions appear within a 24 hour period. Personnel with evidence of immunity shall be excluded from work for 3-5 days and monitored. This can last up to 28 days and until all lesions dry and crust.