



## FACT SHEET: Shingles, (Varicella Zoster Virus)

Shingles is a reactivation of the chicken pox virus and can only develop in someone that has had chicken pox in the past. After infection with chicken pox, the virus remains dormant, but sometimes it reactivates and travels along nerve pathways to the skin which produces a rash that causes shingles. The rash occurs on one side of the body and can be very painful. The rash contains chicken pox virus, which means a person can get chicken pox, (not shingles), from the rash if they have never had chicken pox before or have not been vaccinated.

It is not easy to be infected with chicken pox by just being in a room with someone with shingles. Most students have been vaccinated against the chicken pox virus and most adults have had the disease and are immune.

**Shingles is the reactivation of the chicken pox virus on the skin and is mainly transmitted by:**

- Direct contact with the rash or fluid from blisters

**Please monitor your child for the following symptoms of chicken pox:**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Fever  | Fatigue  |
| Loss of appetite   | Headache |
| Rash- itchy, red at first, progressing to fluid-filled blisters that eventually scab. Usually starts on the chest, back, and face and can spread through the entire body |          |

***If your child develops any symptoms please keep them home and call your healthcare provider.***

### **Prevention:**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Chicken pox vaccine, (not in pregnancy or immunocompromised people)
- Avoid anyone with symptoms

**Individuals at High Risk:** Always consult with your healthcare provider with any questions or concerns. People who are not vaccinated or have not had the disease are at the highest risk of developing chicken pox. If you are not sure there is a blood test that can check your status. Newborns, older people, immunocompromised people, and pregnant women are most at risk for complications and should contact their healthcare provider right away.

**Return to School:** Your child can return to school once they are cleared by their healthcare provider and they have had:

- No fever for over 24 hours, and
- Can cover the lesions completely and
- Feel well enough to participate in classroom activities.

**Any questions please email/call your school nurse, (found on your home school website).**

For more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/shingles/index.html>