



Dear Parent or Guardian:

A person in your child's school or child care has chickenpox and your child may have been exposed. Chickenpox (varicella) is a very contagious illness caused by the varicella-zoster virus. Even healthy children and adults can become seriously ill from chickenpox.

About 10 – 21 days after exposure to chickenpox a mild fever develops. In another 2 or 3 days, a blister-like rash starts on the trunk and face. Eventually, a person may be covered with 250 to 500 itchy blisters, forming scabs in about 5 days. Chickenpox is spread from person to person by direct contact with the blisters and occasionally through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person with chickenpox is contagious 1 to 2 days before the rash appears and until the blisters have turned to scabs.

Chickenpox can be prevented through vaccination. A series of two shots is now recommended. Anyone who has not previously had chickenpox or did not receive the varicella vaccine can get chickenpox—monitor exposed children for 3 weeks following exposure for symptoms. Children with chickenpox need to be excluded from school or child care until all the blisters have formed scabs. Please let your child care or school know if your child gets ill with chickenpox. If you have questions, please call the Snohomish Health District's Communicable Disease Outreach program at 425.339.5278.

*This letter was printed from the Snohomish Health District's website. If your child's caregiver has provided you with this notice and you have additional questions, call Communicable Disease Outreach at 425.339.5278. This letter is reviewed annually. This document is not valid after 06/2012.*