

Is a child with shingles allowed to go to school?

Yes, if they are well and the rash is covered.

Further information is available from your:

School nurse

Family doctor

Community Infection Control Nurses

Calderdale: 01422 307330

Huddersfield: 01484 466051

NHS Direct: 0845 4647

Compiled by the Infection Control Team of
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust for

Calderdale **NHS**
Primary Care Trust

Issued July 2004

Ref: Cpox&shingles.04

Review July 2006

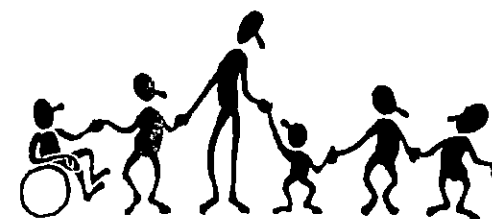
Calderdale **NHS**

Primary Care Trust

Common questions answered

about

CHICKENPOX & SHINGLES



This leaflet gives general
information about Chickenpox and
shingles

Chickenpox

What is Chickenpox?

Chickenpox is a common childhood infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus. If caught as an adult the infection can be more severe (More than 90% of adults are immune).

What are the symptoms?

A typical chickenpox rash first appears on the trunk (tummy chest and back). The spots start as small lumps, turning into clear fluid filled spots (vesicles), which become pustules and then dry to crusts. The spots appear in 'crops' and are more common on the trunk than the limbs.

How do you catch it?

The virus is spread from person to person by direct contact with the fluid in the spots, or on the breath of the infected person. This makes chickenpox particularly infectious. However, the affected person is only infectious just before and for the first 5 days of the rash.

Can it be prevented?

Some people are at risk of severe illness if they catch chickenpox, such as pregnant women who have not already had chickenpox, new-born babies of non-immune mothers and those whose immune system is not working as it should. If exposed, they should seek medical attention and may be given antibodies to protect them.

Can it be treated?

Chickenpox requires no treatment and the child will recover without any medical intervention.

Is a child with chickenpox allowed to go to school?

No. They should be excluded until 5 days after the spots first appear. The spots do not have to be fully healed before the child returns to school.

Shingles

What is shingles?

Once you have had chickenpox, the virus remains in the body. Shingles is a reactivation of your own chickenpox. You do not catch shingles from another person with shingles.

What are the symptoms?

The shingles rash has small fluid filled spots (vesicles), which merge together. It typically follows the path of a nerve e.g. across the face, around the chest or back.

Shingles is very painful and can persist for several days.

Can it be treated?

Again, a child with shingles will generally recover without any medical intervention.

So, is shingles infectious?

Shingles can cause chickenpox in someone who has not had it before or whose immune system is not working. It only spreads by direct contact with the fluid in the vesicles.