

Guidelines regarding Communicable Diseases

Chickenpox (*Varicella Zoster virus*)

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection; direct contact with fluid from a vesicle or an infected person. Once the scabs are dry they are no longer infectious.

Incubation period: 13 - 17 days

Period of Communicability: from 2 days before rash until all blisters have crusted.

Exclusion: Exclude until at least 5 days after the eruptions first appears. Some remaining scabs do not justify exclusion.

Contacts: Any child with an immune deficiency (eg leukemia) or receiving chemotherapy, should be excluded for their own protection.

Conjunctivitis (*Various bacteria and viruses*)

Transmission: Direct or indirect contact with secretion from infected eyes.

Incubation period: 1 - 3 days

Period of Communicability: While eye discharge is present.

Exclusion: Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (*Coxsackie A virus*)

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection or direct contact with the fluid in the blisters or contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation period: Usually 3 to 7 days

Period of Communicability: While blisters are present. Faeces remain infectious for several weeks.

Exclusion: Exclude until all blisters have crusted.

Head Lice - see separate information sheet

Impetigo - School sores (*various bacteria; usually staphylococci & streptococci*)

Transmission: Direct contact with an infected person.

Incubation period: 1 - 3 days

Period of Communicability: Until sores are healed.

Exclusion: Exclude until treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a dressing.

Influenza-Like Illness (*various viruses*)

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection or direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation period: Usually 1 - 3 days

Period of Communicability: Usually 3 to 7 days.

Exclusion: Exclude until well.

Measles (measles virus)

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection; or direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions.

Incubation period: 7 - 18 days

Period of Communicability: About 4 to 5 days before rash begins until 4th day after rash appears.

Exclusion: Exclude for at least 4 days after the onset of the rash.

Contacts: Immunised contact not excluded.

Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case they may return to school.

Meningococcal Meningitis Infection (Neisseria meningitidis)

Transmission: Direct contact with contaminated nose and throat secretions

Incubation period: 3 - 4 days

Period of Communicability: Until *N. meningitidis* is no longer present in nasal and throat secretions.

Exclusion: Exclude until well.

Contacts: Not excluded. Public Health authorities may arrange for close contacts to be given a course of antibiotics.

Ringworm (eg Tinea)

Transmission: Direct contact with infected person, contaminated articles or animals.

Incubation period: 4 to 14 days

Period of Communicability: As long as lesions are present and viable spores persist on contaminated materials.

Exclusion: Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.

Rubella - German Measles (Rubella virus)

Transmission: Airborne or droplet infection; direct contact with contaminated nose or throat secretions; mother-to-child.

Incubation period: 14 - 23 days. Usually 16 to 18 days.

Period of Communicability: From 7 days before to at least 4 days after the onset of the rash.

Exclusion: Exclude until at least 4 days after onset of rash.

Shingles

Transmission: Direct contact with fluid from a vesicle of an infected person.

Incubation period: Reactivation of latent chickenpox virus.

Period of Communicability: Up to 1 week after the appearance of the lesions.

Exclusion: Until lesions are dry.