

Helping children today have healthier tomorrows



Ask your child's health care provider what you can do concerning the following diseases.

Chickenpox (Varicella) is easily spread by coughing and sneezing. It is also spread by close contact with the rash. The illness can include headache, fever, general discomfort, and an itchy rash. The rash may develop into blisters. Problems can include infection of the rash and rarely, infection of the lungs and swelling of the brain.

Diphtheria is a throat infection. May cause sore throat and fever. People with diphtheria can get a thick film on the back of the throat. This film can cause difficulty breathing, which can lead to possible coma. It is rare in developed countries.

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) usually affects infants. Hib spreads through coughing and sneezing. May cause skin, throat, and blood infections. Can also cause swelling around the brain (meningitis) and lung infection.

Hepatitis A is a liver disease. Spreads by putting objects with hepatitis A virus in the mouth. Also spreads by infected food or water. May cause yellow skin or eyes, tiredness, stomachache, and loss of appetite.

Hepatitis B is a liver disease. Spreads through blood and other body fluids. May cause yellow skin or eyes, tiredness, stomachache, loss of appetite, and joint pain. May lead to ongoing liver illness, including liver cancer.

Influenza (Flu) spreads through coughing and sneezing. May cause fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose, and muscle aches. Problems may include lung, sinus or ear infections.

Measles may cause rash, high fever, coughing, runny nose, and watery eyes. May rarely lead to ear, lung, and brain infections. Brain infections, while rare, may lead to permanent brain damage or death.

Mumps may cause fever, headache, muscle ache, and swelling of the glands under the jaw. Infection may lead to swelling around the brain, hearing loss, and may also make the testicles swell and be painful.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) causes very hard coughing and difficulty breathing. May lead to lung infection and swelling of the brain.

Pneumococcal Disease is caused by bacteria in the nose and throat. May cause fever and coughing. Problems may include lung infection, infection of the blood, or brain and spinal cord. It is also a common cause of ear infection.

Polio spreads through contact with an infected person. May cause fever, sore throat, upset stomach, headaches, and stiffness in the neck, back, and legs. Problems may sometimes include paralysis (an inability to move or feel a part of the body).

Rotavirus can cause fever, vomiting, and diarrhea that can be severe and can lead to loss of body fluids (dehydration), hospitalizations, and even death in some children. Rotavirus is usually spread through contaminated hands or objects, and can remain on surfaces for a long time.

Rubella (German Measles) spreads by coughing and sneezing. May cause a mild fever, swollen glands in the neck, pain and swelling in the joints, and a rash that lasts for a short time. May cause birth defects in babies of pregnant women.

Tetanus (Lockjaw) enters the body through a cut or wound. May cause painful muscle spasms, the inability to open the mouth (lockjaw), and difficulty swallowing.

For more information about these diseases:


American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
1-800-274-2237 www.aafp.org

American Academy of Pediatrics
1-847-434-4000 www.aap.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) www.cdc.gov

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
1-888-463-6332 www.fda.gov

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)
1-800-370-2943 www.nichd.nih.gov

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