



Kingswood Early Years Centre

Chickenpox is a mild and common childhood illness that most children catch at some point.

It causes a rash of red, itchy spots that turn into fluid-filled blisters. They then crust over to form scabs, which eventually drop off.

Some children have only a few spots, but in others they can cover the entire body. The spots are most likely to appear on the face, ears and scalp, under the arms, on the chest and stomach and on the arms and legs.

Chickenpox (medically known as varicella) is caused by a virus called the varicella-zoster virus. It is spread quickly and easily through the coughs and sneezes of someone who is infected.

Chickenpox is most common in children under 10. In fact, chickenpox is so common in childhood that 90% of adults are immune to the condition because they have had it before.

Children usually catch chickenpox in winter and spring, particularly between March and May.

What to do Chickenpox is most infectious from one to two days before the rash starts until all the blisters have crusted over. **To prevent spreading the infection, keep children off Nursery or Pre-School until all the spots have crusted over (usually five to six days after the start of the rash).**

People who are most at risk of problems: newborn babies, pregnant women and anyone with a weakened immune system (for example, people having cancer treatment or taking steroid tablets).