CHICKEN POX
THE DISEASE CAUSED BY MICROBES

CHICKEN POX OVERVIEW

Chickenpox is a common illness that mainly affects children and causes an itchy, spotty rash. Most children will catch chickenpox at some point. It can also occur in adults who did not have it when they were a child. It’s usually mild and clears up in a week or so, but it can be dangerous for some people, such as pregnant women, newborn babies, and people with a weakened immune system.

People affected by chickenpox per year:

4 100 980

10%
90%

Approximately 90% of persons in a household who have not had chickenpox will get it if exposed to an infected family member.

Some problems that may occur:

Most people with chickenpox will make a full recovery but occasionally serious complications can occur. These are more common in adults, pregnant women, newborn babies, and people with weakened immune systems. Possible complications include:

- A bacterial skin infection – this can cause the skin to become red, swollen, and painful.
- A lung infection (pneumonia) – this can cause a persistent breathing difficulty and chest pain.
- Pregnancy problems – including the infection spreading to the baby.

Almost everyone by adulthood receives chickenpox.

The virus spreads from person to person by direct contact or through the air.

Adults are more likely to suffer serious complications, such as the spread of the infection, and death.

Vaccines are highly effective in protecting against chickenpox.

More than 80 million doses of chickenpox vaccine have been given since 1995.