

Essential Guidelines for Managing Chickenpox: Do's and Don'ts



DO's FOR CHICKENPOX

- **Treat the itch**

Scratching chickenpox spots can lead to scarring or infection. Chickenpox spots should be treated with a cooling cream, gel, or calamine lotion which can reduce the itching significantly.

- **Keep the skin and spots clean**

Bathe regularly to help avoid infection, as will changing clothing and bedding frequently. This will help with a speedy recovery from chickenpox.

- **Stay hydrated**

Drinking plenty of water will help the body get rid of the virus more quickly and prevent dehydration.

- **Stay home and isolated from family members**

Once chickenpox is diagnosed, it is still very contagious until the final spot has crusted over. This is usually five days from the start of the rash. Stay home and away from family members who haven't already had chickenpox.

- **Monitor the fever closely**

Monitor your fever. If it gets very high and remains for many days, contact your doctor.

- **Take a soothing bath**

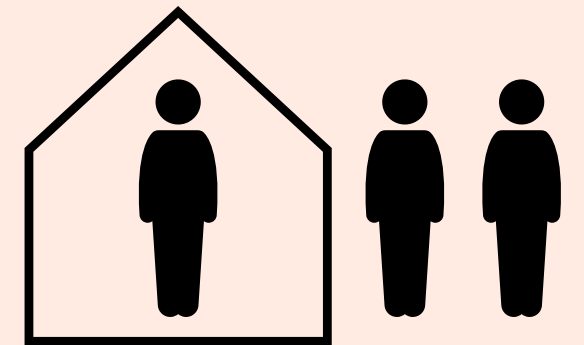
A lukewarm bath can help soothe itchy skin. Gently pat the skin dry and use a separate clean towel for the infected person.

- **Get the vaccine (for family members who haven't had chickenpox)**

Two doses of the chickenpox vaccine are over 90% effective at preventing it. Most people who get the vaccine don't get chickenpox – and those who do usually get a much milder version of the disease.

- **Other Important DOs:**

1. DO call your healthcare provider at once if you're pregnant and think that you were exposed to chickenpox.
2. DO wash your hands regularly and wash bed linens and recently worn clothes with hot, soapy water.
3. DO keep fingernails short to prevent scratching and avoid infection.
4. DO rest but allow quiet activity.
5. DO call your healthcare provider if vomiting, restlessness, and irritability occur, with decreased consciousness.



DON'Ts FOR CHICKENPOX

- **Don't use ibuprofen or aspirin**

While paracetamol is fine to give and can help with a high temperature and aches and pains, ibuprofen can, in some cases, cause severe skin infections. It's also important not to give children aspirin, as it may cause a serious condition called Reye's Syndrome.

- **Don't scratch**

This is a tough one because the temptation is fierce. Pat the spots rather than scratch to prevent infection and scarring from the spots.

- **Don't wear clothes that irritate the skin**

Wear soft and loose clothing to prevent irritating the skin.

- **Other Important DON'Ts:**

1. DON'T scratch blisters or scabs.
2. DON'T expose pregnant women, newborns, elderly people, or those with low resistance to infection to chickenpox.
3. DON'T let infected children go to school or day care for at least 6 days after the first blisters appear. Dried, crusted scabs are not infectious.

