

Communicable Disease Information for Schools & Child Care Centres

It is important to stay home when you are sick to prevent the spread of infections. Vaccines are the best protection against infectious diseases. Learn more about [immunizations for staff and children](#).

Disease	Symptoms	How it Spreads	When it Spreads	Returning to School/Child Care
<p>Chickenpox (Varicella-Zoster virus)</p> <p>A vaccine is available.</p>	<p>Symptoms usually start 10-21 days after exposure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Rash • Tiredness • Loss of appetite • Headache • Generalized, itchy rash: crops of small red spots turn into fluid-filled blisters that crust as they resolve 	<p>Spreads easily from person-to-person by direct contact, droplet or airborne through the air (coughing/sneezing).</p> <p>It may be spread indirectly through freshly contaminated surfaces or items.</p>	<p>Infectious 1-2 days before the rash develops, until crusting of all blisters.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school.</p>
<p>COVID-19</p>	<p>Learn more about COVID-19.</p>			
<p>Measles (Rubeola, Red Measles, Morbillivirus)</p> <p>A vaccine is available.</p>	<p>Symptoms typically start 7-21 days after exposure. Rash usually appears 14 days after exposure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fever • Cough • Runny nose • Red eyes • Small white spots (Koplik spots) can appear on the inside of the mouth and throat. Then, 3-7 days after the symptoms start, a red blotchy rash appears on the face and then progresses down the body. 	<p>Highly contagious, spreads easily from person-to-person through the air.</p> <p>Direct contact with respiratory secretions of an infected person.</p>	<p>Infectious 4 days before the onset of rash until 4 days after the onset of rash.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school</p> <p>AND</p> <p>4 days after the beginning of rash and when the child is able to participate.</p>

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<p>MPOX A vaccine is available, based on eligibility.</p>	<p>Symptoms usually start 5-21 days after exposure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (1-5 days before rash) • Headache • Muscle/back aches • Swollen lymph nodes • Chills • Tiredness • Cough or sore throat (sometimes) • Runny nose • Rash 	<p>Historically human infections have occurred from exposure to infected animals. Spreads from skin-to-skin contact with lesions, blisters or rash; OR Contact with objects, fabrics and surfaces used by someone who has the virus. Recent evidence has shown that contact with respiratory droplets from breathing, talking, coughing or sneezing has not been linked to the spread of MPOX.</p>	<p>Infectious once rash develops, until blisters have crusted over and fallen off with a fresh layer of skin.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school AND Toronto Public Health will provide guidance on when the individual can return.</p>
<p>Mumps (Rubulavirus) A vaccine is available.</p>	<p>Symptoms usually start 12-25 days after exposure, most commonly 16-18 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swollen and tender glands (parotid gland) at the jaw line on one or both sides of the face • May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Fever ◦ Muscle aches and pains ◦ Malaise and loss of appetite ◦ Headache ◦ Inflamed testes ◦ Respiratory symptoms especially for children aged five and under 	<p>Spreads from person-to-person during face-to-face contact and direct contact with saliva or respiratory droplets* from the nose or throat of infected person. Mumps is spread through coughing, sneezing, sharing drinks, kissing or contact with any surface that has been contaminated with the virus.</p>	<p>Infectious 7 days before to 9 days after the onset of parotitis (swelling).</p> <p>Most infectious between 2 days before the onset of parotitis to 5 days after the onset of parotitis.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school AND 5 days after the onset of parotid gland swelling or symptom onset if parotitis is not present.</p>

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<p>Pertussis (Whooping Cough, Bordetella pertussis)</p> <p>A vaccine is available, based on eligibility.</p>	<p>Symptoms can start 6-20 days after exposure, usually 9-10 days. Usually begins like a common cold with runny nose and cough. Cough progressively becomes frequent and severe and may result in a high-pitch whoop sound (paroxysms). Loss of breath or vomiting after coughing bouts may occur. A gradual recovery period will follow, which may take weeks to months.</p>	<p>Spreads from direct contact with respiratory secretions of infected person via droplets* through coughing and sneezing.</p>	<p>Highly infectious in the early stages of runny nose and cough to 3 weeks after the onset of whooping cough (paroxysms) if not treated or after 5 days of treatment.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Toronto Public Health will provide guidance on when the individual can return.</p>
<p>Rubella (German Measles, Rubivirus)</p> <p>A vaccine is available.</p>	<p>Symptoms usually start 14-21 days after exposure. Characterized by a red rash which starts on the face, low-grade fever, headache, malaise, runny nose and red eyes and swelling of the glands in the neck and behind the ears.</p>	<p>Spreads through direct or droplet* contact from respiratory secretions.</p>	<p>Infectious 7 days before until at least 4 days after the onset of rash.</p>	<p>Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire or Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school</p> <p>AND</p> <p>7 days after onset of rash.</p>
<p>Non-Reportable Diseases & Critters</p>	<p>Learn more about non-reportable diseases and critters.</p> <p>It is important to stay home when you are sick to prevent the spread of infections.</p> <p>In addition to the guidance on returning to school/child care from the Canadian Pediatric Society fact sheets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Toronto Public Health's Child Care and School Screening Questionnaire <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario's School and Child Care Screening Tool each day before attending child care or school 			

*Respiratory droplets that come out of your nose and mouth when you breathe, talk, cough or sneeze. Droplets do not remain suspended in the air and usually travel less than two metres.

References

- Heymann D. L. & American Public Health Association (2016). [Control of Communicable Diseases Manual: An Official Report of the American Public Health Association](#)
- Ontario Public Health Standards, [Infectious Disease Protocol](#)
- Canadian Pediatric Society, [Caring for Kids](#)
- Public Health Ontario, [Routine Practices](#)