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CDC/ Dr. John Noble, Jr.

Call your Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) if you have any questions about child health and safety, or any special training needs.



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The Child Care Nurse Consultant Program is funded by



Quality Care For Kids

A newsletter for Scott County Child Care Providers

Written by Heidi Hotvedt, RN BSN

NOVEMBER 2017

Chickenpox

Chickenpox (also called varicella) is a disease that causes an itchy rash of blisters and a fever. A person with chickenpox may have as many as 500 blisters. The rash can spread over the whole body. Chickenpox can be serious, even life-threatening, especially in babies, adolescents, adults, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems.

Chickenpox usually causes the following symptoms:

- An itchy rash of blisters
- Fever
- Headache
- Feeling tired

Symptoms usually last 7 to 10 days. Children with a diagnosis of Chickenpox are excluded from care until they are fever free and when all blisters are crusted with no oozing (usually 1 week).

Chickenpox spreads easily, mainly when a person touches or breathes in the virus particles that come from chickenpox blisters. It can also spread through tiny droplets that get into the air from an infected person. Chickenpox can spread 1 to 2 days before the person gets a rash until all the blisters have formed scabs.

The best way to protect against chickenpox is by getting vaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control recommends all children who have never had chickenpox get vaccinated. For best prevention, children should be immunized against chickenpox with the first dose at age 12 to 15 months and a second dose at 4-6 years of age. For a fact sheet on Chickenpox that can be shared with parents go to <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/child/varicella-basics-color.pdf>

Healthy Eating

Children need to eat nutritious foods because their bodies are growing rapidly. Children may receive between 50% and 75% of their daily calories at the child care facility. Research has shown that it may take a child trying a new food as many as 7 times before they will eat it. They learn healthy (or unhealthy) eating habits at a very young age and are influenced by the adults who care for them.

A recent study in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics reported that child care provider behavior during mealtime may influence children to sample nutritious food. The study found that children are more likely to taste nutrient-dense foods when a provider does the following:

- sits with them and eats the same food
- talks about healthy food
- determines if they are full before removing their plate

The study emphasizes the importance of slowing down, taking a few moments to talk about and model healthy choices, and enjoy the mealtime together. For more information about healthy eating go to Go NAP SACC <https://gonapsacc.org/> or the Iowa Child and Adult Care Food Program <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/nutrition-programs/child-adult-care-food-programs>