



Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

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Communicable Disease Guidance for Schools

The following chart contains information and public health recommendations for various communicable diseases in schools and other group activity settings. Diagnosis should always be made by a physician. Exclusion period given is a minimum amount of time and applies to uncomplicated cases of the diseases listed.

Note: Please notify your local Central Michigan District Health Department Branch Office immediately if you are aware of an unusual occurrence of a disease or an unusual number of cases of one type of disease on a given day.

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AND/OR EXCLUSION PERIOD
ANIMAL BITES (Rabies)	Variable. Rabies in man: 5 days to over 1 year; commonly 2 - 8 weeks	Variable depending on species involved.	Seek medical attention immediately. Report to local animal control center.
CHICKENPOX	2 – 3 weeks; commonly 13 – 17 days.	As long as 5 but usually 1 – 2 days before onset of rash and not more than 5 days after first crop of lesions appear.	Exclude until 5 days after the eruption of the first crop of lesions. This includes Zovirax therapy.
CONJUNCTIVITIS (Pink-Eye)	Variable depending on infecting agent.	During course of active infection.	Exclude until medical care and drainage from eyes has cleared.
FIFTH DISEASE (Hungarian Measles)	Variable about 4 – 20 days.	Prior to onset of rash.	No exclusion providing rash is diagnosed as fifth disease by physician.
HAND, FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE	Usually 3 – 5 days.	While sores are present, about 7 -10 days. Can be found in feces for several weeks during acute stage.	Exclude until no new sores appear and other symptoms (fever, sore throat, drooling) are gone.
HEPATITIS, TYPE A	2 – 6 weeks; average is 4 weeks (28 days).	2 weeks before onset of symptoms to a maximum of 2 weeks after onset.	Exclude from food handling and direct patient care until 7 days after onset. Day care exclusion varies.
HEPATITIS, TYPE B	45 days – 6 months; average is 60 – 90 days (2 – 3 months).	Several weeks before onset of symptoms until blood is no longer positive for evidence of virus.	No exclusion except for open sores or if child is biting people.
HEPATITIS, TYPE C	2 weeks to 6 months (commonly 6 – 9 weeks).	1 or more weeks before onset through acute clinical course.	No exclusion except for open sores or if child is biting people.

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AND/OR EXCLUSION PERIOD
HERPES SYMPLEX, TYPE I AND II	2 – 12 days.	Usually as long as lesions are present. Has been found in saliva for as long as 7 weeks after mouth lesions.	No exclusion recommended. Sores on skin should be adequately covered with a bandage.
IMPETIGO	Variable, indefinite; commonly 4 – 10 days.	While sores are draining.	Exclude under treatment and lesions healing and no new lesions appear.
MENINGITIS (Aseptic/Viral)	Depends on type of infectious agent.	Depends on type of infectious agent.	Exclude until physician approves return.
MENINGITIS (Haemophilus influenzae)	Probably short, within 2 – 4 days.	As long as organisms are present.	Exclude until under treatment and physician approves return.
MENINGITIS (Meningococcal)	2 – 10 days; commonly 3 – 4 days.	As long as organisms are present.	Exclude until under treatment and physician approves return.
MONONUCLEOSIS	From 4 – 6 weeks.	Prolonged communicability may persist up to a year or more.	Exclude until under medical care and physician approves return.
MUMPS	12 – 25 days, commonly 18 days.	Usually 48 hours before swelling. As long as 6 days before gland involvement to 9 days after swelling.	Exclude until swelling or other symptoms have disappeared.
PEDICULOSIS (Head Lice)	Eggs hatch in a week.	Until lice and viable eggs are destroyed.	Exclude until 1 st treatment completed. A 2 nd treatment may be necessary 7 – 10 days after 1 st treatment.
PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough)	Commonly 6 – 20 days.	After onset of cold-like symptoms until 5 days after start of treatment with erythromycin.	Exclude until 3 weeks from onset of disease if untreated, or until on antibiotic treatment at least 5 days.
PINWORMS (Enterobiasis)	2 – 6 weeks.	As long as eggs are laid.	Exclude until first treatment completed.
RASH, UNDIAGNOSED, WITH OR WITHOUT FEVER	Variable depending on agent.	Variable depending on agent.	Exclude until rash has disappeared and fever is gone or until a physician diagnosis is obtained.
RINGWORM	10 - 14 days.	As long as lesions are present.	Exclude until on oral medication for 48 hours for lesions of scalp and scalp line including back of neck. Exclude until under topical treatment for face, trunk and extremities. Exclude from swimming and contact sports until lesions are cleared.
RUBELLA (German or 3-day Measles)	Usually 16 – 18 days with a range of 14 – 23 days.	From 1 week before to 4 days after onset of rash.	Exclude until 6 days after onset of rash.

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AND/OR EXCLUSION PERIOD
RUBEOLA (Hard or 10-day Measles)	7 – 18 days; 10 days average.	Beginning of cold symptoms until 4 days after appearance of rash.	Exclude until 4 days after onset of rash.
SALMONELLA	6 – 72 hours; commonly 12 – 36 hours.	During course of infection and until organism is no longer in feces.	Exclude until symptoms have disappeared. Activity exclusion based on CMDHD recommendations.
SCABIES	First exposure 2 – 6 weeks; subsequent exposure 1 – 4 days.	Until mites and eggs are destroyed.	Exclude until 12 hour treatment completed.
SCARLET FEVER AND STREP THROAT	1 – 3 days usually.	Greatest during acute stage of illness, 2 – 4 days after rash appears. 10 – 21 days if untreated.	Exclude until under treatment for 24 hours.
SHIGELLA	12 – 96 hours, usually 1 – 3 days.	During course of infection and until organism is no longer in feces, about 4 weeks after onset.	Exclude until symptoms have disappeared and appropriate stool cultures are negative.
SHINGLES (Herpes Zoster)	No incubation period – reactivation of dormant virus.	As long as 5 but usually 1 – 2 days before rash and not more than 1 week after lesions appear.	If lesions can be covered, no exclusion necessary. If unable to be covered, exclude as for chickenpox.