

Infectious Disease Information for Schools and Childcare Settings



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This resource is to provide school principals and childcare centre (CCC) operators with guidelines on infectious disease prevention and control in schools and CCCs.

Northeastern Public Health recommends that individuals who may have been exposed to an infectious disease and have specific health concerns, such as pregnancy or immunosuppression, be assessed by a health care provider.

Any child who has a fever or is ill and unable to participate in regular activities, should be cared for at home. The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities. If the child was vomiting and/or had diarrhea, the child may return if they have not vomited and/or had diarrhea for 48 hours.

Bites – Animal Bites

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately if a child or staff member is bitten or scratched by an animal (domestic or wild).**
- **Report to public health immediately if a child or staff member has contact with a bat.**

Symptoms:

Symptoms of rabies include a sense of severe anxiety, headache, fever, tiredness, and pain at the site of the bite.

Symptoms of a skin infection include:

- Increased pain
- Redness/discolouration
- Swelling and warmth
- May have a fever in severe cases

How to manage a bite from an animal:

- Allow wound to bleed.
- Immediately wash the area with soap and water.
- Advise parents/guardian to seek medical attention and follow direction from the healthcare provider. A healthcare provider will determine if PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) is necessary in the case of an animal bite. Antibiotics may also be required.

How does rabies and bacteria spread to others?

Rabies:

- If a rabid animal bites a person.
- If the saliva of a rabid animal enters a cut or scratch.
- If the saliva comes in contact with the moist tissues of the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Rabid animals can spread rabies from the time the virus reaches the salivary glands up until death.

Bacterial infections:

- If a scratch or bite from an animal breaks the skin and the wound is not well cleansed.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to rabies and bacteria from animal bites?

- Rabies incubation period is most commonly three (3) to eight (8) weeks.
- Bacterial infections have varying incubation periods, depending on the bacteria involved.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Not required.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer before cleaning wounds.
- Ensure wounds and cuts are well cleansed and bandaged.

Ministry of Natural Resources advice on [What to do if you find a wild animal that appears sick, injured, or orphaned.](#)

- Do not pet or feed unfamiliar wild, domestic, or stray animals.
- Do not go near/disturb animals when they are eating, sleeping, or with their young.
- Do not go near animals when they are fighting.
- Properly seal your garbage to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Teach children about animal safety.

Candidiasis (Thrush, Diaper Rash)

Thrush is a mouth infection caused by the yeast *Candida albicans*.

Diaper rash is a rash in the groin area/skin folds. The rash can be caused by the yeast *Candida albicans*. It can also happen if the child has very sensitive skin or if urine or stool in the diaper touches skin for too long.

Sometimes thrush and a diaper rash can occur at the same time.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

Thrush:

- Whitish/grey patches on the tongue, inside of the cheek, and/or the roof of the mouth. Patches cannot be rubbed off.
- Not usually painful.

Diaper Rash:

- Rash that is red/pink or lighter than the skin in darker skin-tones.
- Rash may have a flaky, raised border
- May be painful
- Babies/toddlers may cry more due to pain/discomfort.

How does Candidiasis spread to others?

- Breastfeeding. Breastfed babies and their mothers can have a yeast infection at the same time and pass it to each other.
- Sharing items that are not cleaned properly. Items, such as bottles, pacifiers, toys that are contaminated can spread thrush.
- Leaving diapers on for prolonged periods.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- When lesions/rash are present.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Varies, often two (2) to five (5) days for thrush in infants.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Not required.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and sterilize bottles and pacifiers.
- Do not share bottle nipples between children.
- Change diapers often.
- Do not share creams/ointments between children.

Chickenpox (Varicella)

Chickenpox is an infection caused by the Varicella zoster virus.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health within one business day.**

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Itchy skin rash that looks like spots initially. Spots could be red, pink, violet, brown, or skin-coloured, depending on skin tone. Rash begins on chest, back, underarm, neck and face. The rash changes to fluid-filled blisters (that look like pimples) a few days later, then scabs over. The spots, blisters, and scabs can happen at the same time).

How does the chickenpox virus spread to others?

- Breathing in the virus through the air.
- Touching the fluid in a chickenpox blister.
- Touching objects that have the blister fluid on them.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Usually, one (1) to two (2) days before onset of rash and continuing until all lesions are crusted (usually about five (5) days).

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the chickenpox virus?

- 10 to 21 days, commonly 14 to 16 days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- Child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities, regardless of the state of the rash.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Disinfect surfaces and commonly used items.
- Receive recommended doses of the vaccine. The vaccine is commonly given at 15 months and between four (4) and six (6) years of age.

Cold Sores (Herpes Simplex/Oral Herpes)

Cold sores are a viral infection caused by the herpes simplex virus (type-1). Cold sores appear around the mouth in a group of small blisters.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Painful ulcers in and/or around mouth, may reoccur as simple cold sores. Sores may be itchy.
- Lymph nodes in the face and neck may be swollen.

How do cold sores spread to others?

- Touching saliva or the infected sores.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- When sores are present.
- May be passed to others before the sore is visible.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Two (2) to 12 days, commonly four (4) days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- Child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.
- If the child has severe sores with drooling, consider excluding them until they do not have a fever and are able to participate in regular activities without excessive drooling.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Avoid sharing drinks, food, and utensils.
- Avoid direct contact with cold sores.

Croup/Viral Laryngitis

Croup is a common childhood condition and is an infection of the throat, vocal cords (or larynx), and airways of the lungs. It can be caused by several different viruses. This condition tends to affect infants and young children, usually between the ages of six (6) months and five (5) years.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

- Cold-like symptoms
- Fever
- Cough that sounds like a bark
- Hoarse voice
- Children may have difficulty breathing. Rapid and noisy breathing is common.
- Tiredness
- Symptoms may be worse at night

How do germs spread to others?

- Touching the hands of someone who has the infection.
- Breathing in the virus after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Sharing items such as water bottles, straws, or eating utensils.
- Touching objects that have been touched by someone who has the infection, such as toys or surfaces, and then touching their nose or mouth.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- From first days of illness until as long as signs of illness/fever are present (typically seven (7) days).

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Two (2) to 14 days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- Child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and commonly used items.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or into your upper sleeve. Throw out the tissue and clean your hands.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is two (2) or more episodes of loose or watery stool.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately if two (2) or more individuals have diarrhea within 48 hours.**
- **Report to public health immediately if any individuals have bloody diarrhea.**
- **Report to public health immediately if any individuals have been diagnosed with bacterial diarrhea.**

Symptoms:

- Increase in frequency of stools
- Unformed, loose, or watery stool
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Mucus or blood in stool may also occur

How do germs spread to others?

- Eating or drinking contaminated food or water.
- Touching hands or objects with germs on them.
- Contact with contaminated stool.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Depends on the cause. Possibly for the duration of diarrhea or longer for carriers of specific bacteria.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Depends on the cause.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until symptoms are gone for a minimum of 48 hours or as otherwise directed by public health.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect soiled articles, objects, and surfaces.
- Prepare and handle food properly.

See [Gastrointestinal Infections](#) for more information specific to different kinds of infections.

Ear Infections (Otitis Media)

Ear infections are caused when viruses or bacteria move from the back of the throat and spread to the ear causing infection.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Ear pain. Small children may tug at their ears and cry more often.
- Fever
- Difficulty hearing
- Trouble sleeping
- If related to a cold, may have runny nose, cough, and sneezing.

How do germs spread to others?

- Depends on the cause.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Not usually infectious.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Depends on the cause.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.

Fifth Disease (Slapped Cheek Syndrome)

Fifth Disease is a common infection caused by Parvovirus B19. It often occurs in late winter to early spring.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

- Mild flu-like symptoms (fever, joint pain, muscle aches, headache, stuffy nose, upset stomach, diarrhea)
- Lace-like rash that may be red, purple, or brown (depending on skin tone). The rash starts on the cheeks, then appears on the torso and limbs one (1) to four (4) days later. The rash may last for one (1) to three (3) weeks and may come and go. Rash can be worse with exposure to the sun or heat.

How does Fifth disease spread to others?

- Touching the saliva, nose or throat secretions of an infected person.
- Breathing in droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Sharing bottles/cups, straws, utensils, toothbrushes, and/or toys that are contaminated with the germs.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Before the rash appears.
- No longer contagious after rash is present.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Four (4) days to three (3) weeks

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- Child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing and sneezing. Throw out the tissue and clean hands.
- Avoid unnecessary close contact.

Gastrointestinal (GI) Infections

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately:**
 - **if at least 20% of children and/or staff are affected.**
 - **if two (2) or more people have diarrhea or vomiting within 48 hours.**
 - **if any individuals have bloody diarrhea.**
 - **if any individuals have been diagnosed with bacterial diarrhea.**
 - **if you received a confirmed report of any of the following illnesses: **Campylobacter, Cryptosporidiosis, Escherichia coli, Giardia, Salmonella, and Shigella.****

Symptoms:

- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Vomiting, nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal cramps
- Depending on the cause of the infection, illness may cause fevers, tiredness, and muscle aches.

How do germs spread to others?

- Eating or drinking contaminated food or water.
- Touching animals, hands, or objects with germs on them.
- Contact with contaminated stool.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Depends on the cause.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Campylobacter (bacterial infection) incubation period: One (1) to 10 days
- Cryptosporidiosis (parasitic infection) incubation period: One (1) to 12 days.
- Escherichia coli (bacterial infection) incubation period: Two (2) to 10 days, commonly three (3) to four (4) days.
- Giardia (parasitic infection) incubation period: One (1) to 14 days
- Norovirus (viral infection) incubation period: One (1) to two (2) days
- Rotavirus (viral infection) incubation period: One (1) to two (2) days
- Salmonella (bacterial infection) incubation period: Six (6) to 72 hours.
- Shigella (bacterial infection) incubation period: One (1) to three (3) days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until symptoms are gone for a minimum of 48 hours or as otherwise directed by public health.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect soiled articles, objects, and surfaces
- Drink safe water.
- Prepare and handle food.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus)

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is an infection caused by the Coxsackie virus. The infection occurs more often in the summer and fall.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Loss of appetite
- Sore throat
- Lack of energy
- Painful sores in mouth
- Rash with or without blisters on hands, feet and diaper area.

How does hand, foot, and mouth disease spread to others?

- Touching objects and surfaces that have been touched by someone who has the infection, such as toys or surfaces, and then touching their mouth.
- Touching stool of someone with hand, foot, and mouth disease, and not cleaning hands.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Virus can be found in stool for up to four weeks after the start of illness.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Three (3) to five (5) days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever. The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver that is caused by a virus. Infections happen after eating or drinking contaminated food or water.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Tiredness
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- Dark urine (may be tea-colored)

How does the virus spread?

- Eating or drinking contaminated food or water.
- Touching the stool of an infected person through changing diapers.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- From two (2) weeks before the jaundice appears to one (1) week afterwards.
- Many people have no symptoms, but they can still pass the virus to others.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- 15-50 days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until 14 days after the start of symptoms, or seven (7) days after the start of jaundice, whichever is shorter.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Receive hepatitis A vaccine if you are travelling to a country where hepatitis A is common.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver that is caused by a virus. Hepatitis B infections can be acute (short) or chronic (for life).

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health within one business day.**

Symptoms:

- Tiredness
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- Dark urine (may be tea-colored)

How does the virus spread to others?

- Direct contact with a person's body fluids including sexual contact.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Many weeks before the start of symptoms to throughout the duration of the illness.
- Some people become carriers for life.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- 45–180 days (average 60–90 days)

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Not required.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Receive hepatitis B vaccine especially when travelling to an area where hepatitis B is common.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a common infection in children. It is caused by bacteria Streptococcus (strep) or Staphylococcus (staph). The bacteria enter the body through cuts, scrapes, or insect bites.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

- Rash that looks like a cluster of red bumps or blisters.
- Blisters may ooze honey-coloured fluid. If they crust over, blisters can appear yellow.
- If the infection becomes serious, may have fever, pain and swelling.

How do the germs spread to others?

- Touching fluid from blisters.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- From when the rash appears to 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment (by mouth or topical).

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Varies, but most commonly four (4) to 10 days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until antibiotics have been taken for at least 24 hours and child is able to participate in their regular activities.
- Any draining or open blisters must be covered with a clean, dry bandage.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Don't share towels or facecloths
- Clean and disinfect soiled articles and surfaces.
- Ensure wounds and cuts are well cleansed and bandaged.
- Cover draining or open blisters with a clean, dry bandage.

Lice

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp, where they lay eggs. Head lice do not spread disease. Lice have three (3) stages – the egg (nit), the nymph and the adult.

1. Eggs (nits) are whitish–grey, tan or yellow ovals and are about the size of a grain of sand. They stick to the hair close to the scalp and can look like dandruff.
2. Nymphs look like adult lice but smaller.
3. Adult lice are about the size of a sesame seed. Adult lice can live for up to 30 days on a person’s head, but they die within two (2) days away from the scalp.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Itchy scalp
- Sores on the scalp, back of the neck, or hairline because of scratching
- Eggs glued to the hair near the scalp
- Adult lice and eggs (nits) may be seen behind the ears and near the nape of the neck

How do lice spread to others?

- Hair to hair contact with someone with lice.
- Sharing clothing/accessories, such as hats, headphones, and combs.

When can someone with the infection pass lice to others?

- Until treatment has been completed.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to lice?

- One (1) to two (2) weeks.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Not required.
- Refer to school board and childcare centre policy.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Encourage guardians to regularly check child's hair for lice.
- Avoid head-to-head contact with others.
- Don't share hats, helmets, combs, headphones, or scarves with others.
- Don't lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infected person.

Measles (Red Measles/Rubeola)

Measles is a highly infectious condition caused by a virus. Sometimes measles is called “red measles” (or rubeola). It should not be confused with “German measles,” which is another name for rubella.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Watery/red eyes
- Small white/gray spots inside the mouth (Koplik’s spots).
- Rash begins after a few days (fever continues). Starts on the face and behind the ears, and then spreads down the body, arms, and legs.

How does the measles virus spread to others?

- Breathing in the air after an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. The measles virus can remain in the air for at least two (2) hours.
- Touching saliva, nose or throat secretions of an infected person.
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with the virus. The measles virus can remain on surfaces for at least two (2) hours.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Four (4) days before the rash starts to four (4) days afterwards. The day the rash started is day 0.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Averages 10 to 12 days for fever, cough, runny nose, and/or red eyes
- Averages 14 days (7 to 21 days) for rash

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until four (4) days after the rash or until directed by public health. The day the rash started is day 0.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Receiving the MMR vaccination as scheduled at one (1) year of age and four (4) to six (6) years of age is the best way to prevent measles.
- If possible, avoid contact with anyone who is infected with measles.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect soiled objects and surfaces.

Meningitis (Bacterial and Viral)

Meningitis is an infection of the lining and fluid covering the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by bacteria (bacterial meningitis) or viruses (viral meningitis).

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Severe headache
- Fever
- Drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Stiff neck
- Confusion
- Sensitivity to light
- May develop a pinpoint rash that is red or purple, depending on skin tone. As meningitis progresses, the rash can appear more like bruise-like blotches.

In babies/non-verbal children:

- Vomiting
- Feeding poorly
- Very irritable/fussy
- Fever
- Change in alertness
- Swelling on the soft spot of a baby's skull

How do the germs spread to others?

- Breathing in the germs after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Sharing items such as utensils, water bottles, toys, and mouth guards.
- Kissing.
- Viral meningitis can also spread through contact with stool.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Bacterial Meningitis: Until 24 to 48 hours after prescribed treatment has started
- Viral Meningitis: Depends on specific virus

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Depends on the cause. Usually 2-10 days (often 3-4 days)

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until 48 hours after the prescribed treatment has started, fever has ended, and the child is well enough to participate fully in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Vaccines are available to prevent bacterial meningitis caused by haemophilus influenzae type b and meningococcus.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing and sneezing. Throw out the tissue and clean hands.

Mono (Mononucleosis)

Mononucleosis, or mono, is a common viral infection that is caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). Infection is most common in teenagers and young adults.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

Most people infected do not have symptoms. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Extreme tiredness
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Swelling and tenderness of the salivary glands (between the jaw and the ears)
- Swelling of the lymph nodes of the neck and armpits

How does the virus spread to others?

- Sharing items such as water bottles, straws, drinking cups, toys, or eating utensils that have someone's spit on them.
- Kissing.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Prolonged, can be contagious for up to 1 year

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Usually 4-6 weeks

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.
- The child/youth should avoid contact sports for 4 to 6 weeks to protect the spleen from injury.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Don't share items that have someone's spit on it, such as water bottles, straws, drinking cups, or eating utensils.
- Avoid kissing someone with mono.

Mumps

Mumps is a contagious illness that is caused by a virus.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Painful and swollen salivary glands that cause swelling under the ears/neck area
- Fever
- Headache
- Difficulties chewing or swallowing
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness

How does the virus spread to others?

- Breathing in the virus after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Sharing items, such as water bottles, straws, drinking cups, toys, or eating utensils.
- Touching objects that have been touched by someone who has the infection, such as toys or surfaces. and then touching their nose or mouth.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Seven (7) days before to five (5) days after swelling begins

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- 14-25 days, but 16-18 days average

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until five (5) days after the start of the swelling, or start of the symptoms, if swelling isn't present.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Receiving the MMR vaccination as scheduled at one (1) year of age and four (4) to six (6) years of age is the best way to prevent mumps.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect soiled objects and surfaces.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Pertussis, also called whooping cough, is an infection of the lungs and airways. It is caused by *Bordetella pertussis*. It occurs more often in children and adolescents, but adults can also develop pertussis.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Cold-like symptoms (fever, runny nose, sneezing, and mild coughing)
- Cough progresses to repeated bouts of coughing fits
- Coughing fits may end with a high-pitched “whoop”, vomiting, and/or a pause in breathing
- Coughing fits, can cause difficulty breathing, eating, or sleeping

How does the bacteria spread to others?

- Breathing in the virus after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Touching a surface that has been touched by someone who has the infection and then touching their eyes or mouth.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- If not treated with antibiotics, individuals are highly contagious up to three (3) weeks after the start of the cough.
- If antibiotics are started, the individual is no longer contagious after five (5) days of treatment.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Six (6) to 20 days, commonly nine (9) to 10 days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.
- Advise to avoid contact with young children, infants, and individuals in their third trimester of pregnancy until the individual has completed five (5) days of appropriate antibiotic therapy or it is 21 days after their cough started.
- School/childcare centre exclusion criteria will be assessed by public health upon case investigation.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Children are vaccinated at 2, 4, 6, and 18 months, with a booster between 4 and 6 years old and 14 and 16 years old. A one-time dose for adults who have not received a previous booster vaccination is recommended.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.

Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)

Pinkeye is an infection that affects the covering of the eyeball and the inside of the eyelid. It can be caused by a virus or bacteria.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Red, watery, itching, and burning eyes
- Whites of the eyes are pink or red
- Eyelids may be swollen
- Eye discharge. Discharge may cause eyelids to crust over and stick together during the night.

How does pinkeye spreads to others?

- Touching the discharge from an infected eye.
- Touching an object that is contaminated with discharge from an infected eye.
- If the infection is caused by a cold, the germs can spread through coughing and sneezing.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Viral pink eye: 10 to 12 days after the start of symptoms
- Bacterial pink eye: From the start of symptoms until 24 hours after antibiotics have started

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- One (1) to three (3) days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until the child has seen a doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist.
- Encourage guardians to minimize exposure to others by keeping their child home during this time if the child's behaviour or environment is such that close contact with others cannot be avoided.
- If an antibiotic is prescribed by a health care provider, the child can return 24 hours after start of treatment.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean and disinfect soiled articles, objects, and surfaces.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer especially after touching or wiping infected eyes. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Don't share towels or washcloths.

Pinworms

Pinworms are tiny, white, thread-like worms that live in the intestine. The worms crawl out of the anus (bum) at night and lay their eggs on nearby skin.

Pinworms can be uncomfortable, but they do not cause disease.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

Usually, children with pinworms have no symptoms. However, some children get very itchy around the anus and/or vagina, especially at night.

How do pinworms spread to others?

- A person who has pinworms scratches the itchy area and pinworms get on their fingers or under their fingernails. If the infected person touches another person's mouth, they can spread the pinworms to them.
- Sharing toys, toilet seats or baths, clothes or bedding. Eggs can get from an infected person onto objects and other people can pick up the eggs on their hands and then put them into their mouth.

When can someone with pinworms pass the pinworms or eggs to others?

- Pinworms can live outside of the body for two (2) to three (3) weeks on bedding, clothing, or other objects.
- Individuals with pinworms can spread worms and eggs to others until treatment is started.

When do symptoms start after being exposed?

- 1 to 2 months

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Not required.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently, especially after going to the toilet, changing diapers, and before prepping or eating food.
- Open blinds or curtains in bedrooms during the day to allow the light to come into the room. Eggs are sensitive to sunlight.
- Don't shake bedding or clothes. This can scatter the eggs.
- Launder clothes and bedding in hot water.
- Disinfect surfaces.
- Keep fingernails short and avoid nail-biting.

Respiratory Illnesses (COVID-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Influenza-like illness)

Respiratory infections can be caused by bacteria or viruses. Germs can cause infections in the nose, throat, and lungs. COVID-19, influenza, and RSV are caused by viruses and can be more serious than the common cold.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Loss of appetite
- Fever and chills
- Body aches
- Difficulty breathing

How do germs spread to others?

- Breathing in the germs after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Touching objects that were coughed and sneezed on by someone who has the infection, such as toys or surfaces, and then touching their nose or mouth.
- Kissing, touching or holding hands with someone who has an infection.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- Common-cold: Depends on the cause
- COVID-19: Up to three (3) days before showing symptoms, but contagious period can vary
- Influenza: One day before symptoms develop to 5-7 days after the start of symptoms.
- RSV: Commonly three (3) to eight (8) days from the start of the symptoms but could be as long as three (3) to four (4) weeks

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Common cold: One (1) to three (3) days
- COVID-19: One (1) to 14 days
- Influenza: One (1) to three (3) days
- RSV: Two (2) to eight (8) days, commonly four (4) to six (6) days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.
- If the child was vomiting and/or had diarrhea, the child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and have not vomited and/or had diarrhea for 48 hours.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Vaccines are available for the prevention of COVID-19, Influenza, and RSV.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing and sneezing. Throw out the tissue and clean hands.

Ringworm (*Tinea capitis*, *Tinea corporis*, *Tinea pedis*)

Ringworm is the name for a group of skin infections caused by fungus that live on the dead tissues of the skin, hair, and nails. Ringworm can appear on the scalp (*tinea capitis*), body (*tinea corporis*), feet (athlete's foot), and/or groin (jock itch).

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Ring-shaped rash that has a raised edge. Rash may appear reddened, purple, or skin coloured, depending on skin tone. The rash can happen on the scalp, body, groin or feet. Rash may be scaly, itchy, and/or flaky.
- Bald patch if the scalp is infected.
- Itchy and uncomfortable cracking between the toes if feet are infected.

How does the fungi spread to others?

- Being in contact with individuals, animals, or items that have ringworm.
- Sharing items such as combs, hairbrushes, or hats that someone with ringworm has worn.
- Walking on floors or using shower stalls without footwear. Pool surfaces can also have the fungi present.

When can someone with the infection pass the fungi to others?

- For as long as rash is present.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the fungi?

- One (1) to 21 days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until treatment has started.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently especially after touching pets.
- Don't share items such as towels, combs, hairbrushes, linens, clothes, or helmets with someone who has ringworm.
- Launder soiled clothes and linens with hot water.
- Wear flip flops in locker rooms and public shower stalls, and at public pools.
- Wash sports gear regularly.

Roseola (3-day rash, Sixth Disease)

Roseola is a common viral infection in infants and young children (most common between 6 months to 4 years old) that is caused by human herpesvirus 6 (HHV-6).

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- High fever that lasts for three (3) to five (5) days
- Rash of small spots after the fever. Rash may look brown, gray, pink, or red, depending on skin tone. Rash usually starts on the torso, and spreads to the neck, face, legs, and arms. Rash is usually not itchy.

How does the virus spread to others?

- Touching spit from someone who has roseola and then touching eyes or nose.
- Breathing in the germs after someone has coughed or sneezed.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- For as long as symptoms are present.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- Five (5) to 15 days, usually about 10 days.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- **It is important to determine if the rash is due to roseola prior to returning to school/childcare setting.**
- Exclude from the school/childcare centre if the child has a fever.
- The child may return if they have not had a fever for 24 hours and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing and sneezing. Throw out the tissue and clean hands.

Rubella (German Measles, 3-day measles)

Rubella is an infection caused by a virus that affects the skin and lymph nodes.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Report to public health immediately.**

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Runny nose
- Red eyes
- Swollen neck lymph nodes
- Joint pain
- Rash that may appear pink, red, brown or skin coloured (depending on skin tone) appears. Rash appears on the face and quickly spreads to the torso and arms/legs within 24 hours. The rash typically lasts for 3 days.

How does the virus spread to others?

- Breathing in the virus after someone has coughed or sneezed.
- Touching objects that have been touched by someone who has the infection, such as toys or surfaces, and then touching their nose or mouth.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- About one (1) week before the rash appears until at least four (4) days after the start of the rash.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- 14 to 21 days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until seven (7) days after the rash started.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Stay up to date with immunizations. Receiving the MMR vaccination as scheduled at one (1) year of age and four (4) to six (6) years of age is the best way to prevent rubella.
- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing and sneezing. Throw out the tissue and clean hands.

Scabies

Scabies is a skin condition caused by infestation of tiny insects called mites that dig into the skin and lay eggs.

When to report to public health:

- **Not required.**

Symptoms:

- Rash appearing as bumps, patches, or tiny lines, that are usually between the fingers/toes and/or groin. The rash can appear red, pink, skin-coloured, or lighter than skin-tone (depending on skin tone). Rash also might be in skin folds and cover the body in severe cases.
- Itchy, especially at night

How do the mites spread to others?

- Mites spread through skin-to-skin contact with someone who has scabies.
- Sharing items, such as clothing, bedding, or towels, with someone who has scabies.

When can someone with the skin condition pass the mites to others?

- From the start of the symptoms until treated. This may require multiple treatments.
- Mites and eggs must be destroyed to stop the spread.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the mites?

- Two (2) to six (6) weeks after infestation or one (1) to four (4) days after exposure for someone who has had scabies before.

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until completing day one of the treatment.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Avoid skin to skin contact with someone who has scabies.
- Don't share clothes, towels, or bedding with someone who has scabies.
- Launder clothes, towels, and bedding in hot water and dry in a dryer at the hottest setting to kill the mites.

Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever (Streptococcal Infection)

Strep throat and scarlet fever are infections that are caused by Group A Streptococcus.

When to report to public health (1-877-442-1212):

- **Not required unless 20% or more of children and/or staff are affected.**

Symptoms:

Strep throat:

- Very sore and red throat
- Fever

Scarlet fever:

- High fever
- Red and sore throat
- Swollen glands
- “Sandpaper” skin rash that may appear red, brown, or purple (depending on skin tone). Skin may peel after the rash begins to heal.
- Whitish coating in mouth resulting in a “strawberry tongue” appearance

How do germs spread to others?

- Breathing in the germs after someone has coughed or sneezed.

When can someone with the infection pass the germs to others?

- From when symptoms start to 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started.
- Scarlet Fever can be contagious for 10 to 21 days if left untreated.

When do symptoms start after being exposed to the germ?

- One (1) to four (4) days

When should individuals be excluded from schools/childcare centres?

- Exclude from the school/childcare centre until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started, and child is well enough to participate in regular activities.

What infection and prevention control measures are recommended by public health?

- Clean hands by washing them with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Encourage staff and students/children to clean their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces.

Resources

For Schools and Childcare Providers:

- [IPAC Checklist for Childcare Centres](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/C/25/child-care-centre-ipac.pdf) (<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/C/25/child-care-centre-ipac.pdf>)
- [Childcare Centres Cleaning and Disinfection Schedule](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/C/25/child-care-centre-cleaning-disinfection-schedule.pdf) (<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/C/25/child-care-centre-cleaning-disinfection-schedule.pdf>) from Public Health Ontario
- [Kids Boost Immunity Website: Free Lessons for Students Grades 2-12](https://kidsboostimmunity.com/how-it-works) Developed by Public Health Association of BC (<https://kidsboostimmunity.com/how-it-works>)
- [Active for Life Resources for Educators](https://activeforlife.com/resources/) (<https://activeforlife.com/resources/>)

For Parents and Caregivers:

- [Health811 Live Chat](https://health811.ontario.ca/static/guest/chat-online) with Registered Nurse (<https://health811.ontario.ca/static/guest/chat-online>)
- [Caring for Kids](https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/health-conditions-and-treatments#illnesses-and-infections) Website, Canadian Paediatric Society (<https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/health-conditions-and-treatments#illnesses-and-infections>)
- [Vaccination Information for Parents of Babies and Toddlers](https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-babies-and-toddlers), Ministry of Health (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-babies-and-toddlers>)
- [Vaccination Information for Parents of School-Aged Children](https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-children-school), Ministry of Health (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-children-school>)
- [Diseases and Conditions](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases.html), Public Health Agency of Canada (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases.html>)
- [North East Virtual Care Clinic](https://nevirtualcare.ca/) (<https://nevirtualcare.ca/>)
- Ontario Poison Centre Phone: 1-800-268-9017
- [Parent Resources](https://activeforlife.com/parent-resources/), Active for Life (<https://activeforlife.com/parent-resources/>)
- [Resource on Safely Giving OTC Medications](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthwise/quick-tips-safely-giving-over-counter-medicines-children), HealthLinkBC (<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthwise/quick-tips-safely-giving-over-counter-medicines-children>)

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