

VARICELLA IN CHILDCARE FACILITY: Exclusions Recommended

To: Primary Care Physicians in Windsor County
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– Please Distribute as Appropriate –

A child in the 3-year-old room at Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School in Springfield developed chickenpox last weekend, but was infectious while at the day school on Friday, Oct. 18. This facility has 11 infants, and a number of non-immune/non-immunized attendees. Children over the age of 1 who were at the day school on Oct. 18 were exposed. Infants who were only in the infant room on Oct. 18 and did not have close contact with the older group are not considered exposed. However, additional exposures to the ill child that took place away from the facility have been reported.

After consultation with subject-matter experts from CDC, the Health Department is recommending the following:

- All exposed children who have not received at least one dose of varicella vaccine, or have not had chickenpox, are considered non-immune. They are excluded from child care starting 10 days after their first exposure until 21 days after their last exposure.
- Any child who develops chickenpox may return to child care when all lesions have crusted over (usually five or six days).
- Varicella immunization is strongly encouraged for all children age 12 months or older who have not been fully vaccinated.
 - If given within five days of exposure, varicella vaccine is approximately 70% effective in preventing disease, and 100% effective in modifying illness severity.
 - Varicella immunization is still recommended if given more than five days after exposure, since it can help prevent chickenpox disease in the future.
- Staff who were exposed to the ill child are advised to determine their immune status. Non-immune staff will be excluded as above. Staff with questions about their immune status may consider acquiring serologic proof of immunity, and should receive immunization if not immune.

For questions related to this Advisory: call 802-863-7240 (800-640-4374 in Vermont).