

Childhood Infections

Exclusion periods for childhood infections

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	PERIOD WHEN INFECTIOUS	EXCLUSION PERIOD OF INFECTED PERSON	EXCLUSION OF CONTACTS
Athletes Foot	Unknown	Whilst active lesions present	No exclusion but treatment recommended	None
Chicken Pox	11 – 21 days	1 to 2 days before to 5 days after spots develop	For 5 days from onset of rash	None *Female staff see below
Conjunctivitis	Varies	None	No exclusion but treatment is recommended	None
Diarrhoea & Vomiting	Varies	Whilst having symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting	Until symptom free for 48 hours	None
Diphtheria	2 – 5 days	Variable but usually 2 weeks or less	Until advised clear to return	HPU to advise
Glandular Fever	4 – 6 weeks	Whilst virus is present in the saliva	None	None
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	3 – 5 days	From 2 – 3 days before to a few days after the appearance of rash	The presence of a rash does not indicate infectivity.	None
Head lice	Eggs hatch in 7 – 10 days	Whilst lice or eggs remain alive on host	None. Parents should be advised to treat their child	None but contacts should be checked
Hepatitis A	2 – 6 weeks	From 14 days before to 7 days after the appearance of first symptoms	Until 7 days from onset of jaundice and the person feels well	HPU to advise

Hepatitis B	6 weeks to 6 months	One month before symptoms to 1 – 3 months after, however it is not infectious under normal nursery conditions (universal precautions should be adhered to)	Until person feels well	None
Hepatitis C	2 weeks to 6 months	As Hepatitis B	Until person feels well	None
Herpes Simplex (cold sore)	2 – 20 days	None	None	None
Impetigo	4 – 10 days	Whilst lesions present	Until lesions crusted/healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotics	None
Influenza	1 – 3 days	Adults 1 day before until 5 days after onset Children 3 days before until 9 days after onset	Until recovered	None
Measles	7 – 14 days	From a few days before to 4 days after the appearance of the rash	5 days from onset of rash	None *Female staff see below
Meningitis (Viral)	Varies	Depends on guidance	Until person feels well	None
Meningococcal Infection (Meningitis and Septicaemia)	Varies	Whilst organism remains in nose or throat. Most cases of infection are acquired from	Until person feels well	None

		carriers rather than cases		
Mumps	12 –25 days (average 18)	From 6 days before to 9 days after onset of illness	5 days from onset of swollen glands	None
Ringworm (scalp/body)	2 – 4 weeks	Whilst active lesions present	Exclusion is not required but it is recommended that treatment is commenced before return to school/nursery/childcare setting (Symptomatic pets should also be treated)	None
Rubella (German Measles)	14 – 21 days	7 days before to 6 days after onset of rash	6 days from onset of rash	None *Female staff see below
Scabies	Few days to 6 weeks	Whilst mites remain alive on the host	Until 1st treatment completed	None Treat contacts
Scarlet Fever	1 – 3 days	Day sore throat starts to 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	24 hours from commencing antibiotics	None
Shingles	Reactivation	Until 7 days after rash appears	Exclude only if rash weeping and cannot be covered (Can lead to chicken pox in susceptible children)	None
Slapped Cheek (Parvovirus/Fifth Disease)	4 – 20 days	Before the rash appears (but probably not afterwards)	Until clinically well	None *Female staff see below
Tuberculosis	2 – 10 weeks	Only when sputum contains bacteria	Until person feels well and 2 weeks after treatment started	None. Close contacts may be screened
Warts and Verrucae	2 – 3 months	Whilst warts are present	None	None
Whooping Cough	7 – 10 days	2 – 4 days before until 21	5 days from commencing	

(Pertussis)		days after start of coughing	antibiotic treatment	
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