

OZAUKEE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
P.O. BOX 994
PORT WASHINGTON, WI 53074
284-8170 (local) or 238-8170 (metro)

COMMON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY	PRECAUTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS	GENERAL INFORMATION
CHICKEN POX (Varicella) <i>*Report to local health department</i>	2-3 weeks	Slight fever may occur. Generalized itchy rash develops with small fluid filled lesions that remain 3-4 days, and then crust over.	Spread is airborne or by contact with drainage. Usually contagious for 1-2 days prior to the rash and continues for 5-6 days after rash develops.	Keep home until all lesions are crusted over, usually 5-7 days after rash first appears.	Vaccine available and recommended for all children over 12 months of age.
CONJUNCTIVITIS (Pink Eye)	Usually 1-3 days	Redness noticeable on the white of the eye. May have pus discharge or swelling of the eyelids.	Contagious through contact with eye or discharge while inflammation or discharge is present	Refer for medical diagnosis and treatment. Keep home until non-contagious, usually 24 hrs. after treatment starts.	Handwashing helps prevent transmission. Can be caused by viruses or bacteria.
DIARRHEAL ILLNESSES- ACUTE (many different causative organisms)	6 hours to several days or more	Loose, watery stools. Abdominal cramps. May also have nausea and vomiting.	Contagious through stools during course of illness. May remain infectious for varying time period after symptoms end.	Refer for medical diagnosis and treatment. Handwashing is very important to stop spread of disease.	Avoid food preparation during acute illness.
FIFTH DISEASE (Parvovirus B19 infection/ erythema infectiosum)	4-20 days	Mild illness. Smooth red lace-like rash. Facial rash may have “slapped cheek” appearance.	Contagious from shortly before onset of illness until 1-2 days after rash appears. Rash may reappear over the next few weeks, but is no longer communicable.	Keep home until fever subsides. Handwashing may help prevent transmission.	Pregnant women who have been exposed should consult with their physician.
INFLUENZA	1-3 days	Rapid onset with fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, sore throat, cough.	Spread is airborne or by contact with respiratory droplets. Contagious for 3-7 days after symptoms start.	Keep home until symptoms disappear.	Vaccine is available and is recommended for all high-risk persons and those in close contact with high-risk persons.

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IMPETIGO	Variable. Usually 2-5 days.	Small lesions on the skin which contain pus and later crust over.	Contagious through direct contact with lesions or drainage until after lesions have crusted over.	Refer for medical treatment. Keep home until lesions have crusted or until person has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours. Handwashing is important.	Associated with staphylococcal and streptococcal infections.
LICE (Pediculosis)	Eggs hatch in 1 week, and reach maturity in 1-2 weeks.	Itching of head or body. Tiny insects lay eggs (“nits”) on hair shaft.	Can spread through direct contact or by personal articles. Communicable as long as lice or eggs remain alive on the person or clothing.	Keep home until treated with lice-killing shampoo and all nits are removed from hair. Check close contacts for signs of infestation.	Avoid sharing or storing together any personal belongings such as clothing, combs, brushes, headgear.
PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough) <i>*Must be reported to local health department.</i>	Usually 7-10 days. (Can vary from 5-20 days.)	Starts as mild respiratory illness. Progresses in 1-2 weeks to severe cough with paroxysms or “whoop” which can be followed by vomiting.	If untreated, is contagious from early stage of illness to 3 weeks after paroxysmal cough starts. When treated with antibiotics, contagious for 5-7 days after treatment starts.	Isolate and keep home until 5-7 days after start of antibiotics. Close contacts usually treated with preventive antibiotics.	Illness is most severe during early childhood. Vaccine is part of routine immunization for children, starting at 2 months of age.
RINGWORM	Variable from 1-3 weeks.	Skin lesions that are flat, inflamed, ring-like sores that may itch or burn. May have patches of hair loss on scalp.	Contagious while active lesions are present. Spread by contact with lesions or by contaminated articles.	Keep home until adequate treatment is begun. Cover lesions if possible. Handwashing is important.	
SCABIES	2-6 weeks if first infestation 1-4 days if reinfestation	Intense itching. Rash with red lesions. May see linear burrow marks.	Spread by direct transfer of mites from skin to skin. Contagious until mites and eggs are destroyed by treatment.	Keep home until adequate treatment has been started and no open lesions are present. Preventive treatment of those with skin to skin contact or sharing of personal articles.	Rash is most common in folds of skin, under arms, or between fingers or toes, but can be on any area.
STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTIONS (Strep throat) (Scarlet Fever)	1-3 days	Fever, sore throat, swollen glands. With Scarlet Fever, a fine, red rash appears.	Spread by contact with infected persons, objects, or food. Contagious for 10-21 days if untreated, or for 1-2 days after beginning antibiotics.	Refer for medical diagnosis and treatment. Keep home until 24 hours after antibiotics are started.	Treatment is recommended because of the possibility of complications, including rheumatic fever.