

## Common childhood illnesses

### Chicken pox

Chicken pox is a very common illness in children. It can be easily treated at home and is usually not serious.

#### Symptoms

- Fever
- Rash with blisters
- Feeling sick
- Loss of appetite
- Aching muscles



#### Treatment

You can usually treat chickenpox at home.

- Give liquid Paracetamol to keep your child comfortable. Ask pharmacist for advice on how much to give.
- Do **NOT** give ibuprofen.
- Encourage the child to drink plenty of water. If they feel too poorly, try sugar free ice-lollies!
- Put gloves/socks on the child to stop them from scratching the rash.
- Ask your pharmacist about antihistamines and calamine lotion to stop the itching.
- Your child should be in light, cool, comfortable clothing such as loose cotton pyjamas, if they are uncomfortable.

**Your child needs to be kept away from school and pregnant women, until the spots have crusted over.**



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## Hand, foot and mouth

### Symptoms

- Sore throat
- High temperature, above 38C
- Not wanting to eat
- Ulcers appear in the mouth
- Red spots, which develop into blisters appear on the hands and feet. They appear grey in the centre.



### Treatment

- You are unable to take anti biotics for hand foot and mouth. It usually improves within 7-10 days.
- To help symptoms drink plenty of fluid, avoiding acidic drinks. Eat soft food or soups, nothing too hot or spicy.
- Take paracetamol or ibuprofen to help manage pain.

Hand-foot-and-mouth disease should go away on its own after 7 -10 days. There is no treatment for the illness and no vaccine.

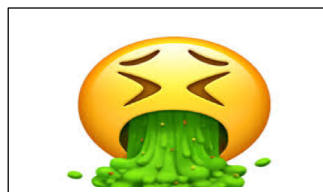
**Exclusion from school is only necessary in extreme cases.**

## Norovirus

Norovirus can be very unpleasant but it usually clears up within a few days.

### Symptoms

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea.
- Abdominal pain or cramps.



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People infected with a norovirus are contagious from the moment they begin feeling ill to at least three days after recovery.

### **Treatment**

Norovirus infection cannot be treated with antibiotics because it is a viral (not a bacterial) infection. If you have norovirus illness, you should drink plenty of liquids to replace fluid lost from throwing up and diarrhoea. Good hygiene practices, including frequent hand washing, are very important during this period. Try to avoid going to your GP, as norovirus can spread to others very easily.

**Children are to be kept home from school until 48 hours clear of last episode.**

### Conjunctivitis

Commonly known as pinkeye, is an inflammation of the conjunctiva. It is very common in children, mostly because it is highly contagious. It is caused by many of the same bacteria and viruses responsible for colds.

### **Symptoms**

- Bloodshot eye/eyes
- Eyes burn or feel gritty
- Pus appears in eyes that sticks to lashes
- Itchy eyes



### **Treatment**

There are things you can do to help ease your symptoms. Use clean cotton wool (one piece for each eye). Boil water and then let it cool down before you:

- gently rub your eye lashes to clean off crusts
- hold a cold flannel on your eyes for a few minutes to cool them down
- Foods rich in Vitamin A and B2 may also be helpful in the treatment of conjunctivitis

**You do not need to avoid school unless your child is feeling very unwell.**

### Impetigo

Impetigo is contagious, which means that you could spread it to other people

### **Symptoms**

Impetigo starts with red sores or blisters. They quickly burst and leave crusty, golden-brown patches. These can:

- look a bit like cornflakes stuck to your skin



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- get bigger
- spread to other parts of your body
- be itchy
- sometimes be painful

## Treatment

- keep sores, blisters and crusty patches clean and dry
- wash your hands frequently
- wash your flannels, sheets and towels at a high temperature
- wash or wipe down toys with detergent and warm water if your children have impetigo
- If it's impetigo your GP can prescribe antibiotic cream to speed up recovery or antibiotic tablets if it's very bad. (After you take the medicine for at least 24 hours, the impetigo isn't contagious anymore. After 3 days, the sores should begin to heal.)

**Children need to be kept at home until lesions are crusted and healed, or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment.**



For further advice email the school health team at [ku19@yourhealthcare.org](mailto:ku19@yourhealthcare.org)

Or contact your GP



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