

Guide to Communicable Diseases for Schools in Perth County



Suspected Disease Outbreaks

When sudden increases in absenteeism are noted, extra vigilance by the school is needed to identify a possible outbreak. Please report immediately to the Health Unit any possible outbreaks at your school. Schools are also required to report to the health unit **any time** more than 10% of the school population is absent for **any reason**.

Call 519-271-7600 ext 256

Listowel area residents call 1-877-271-7348 ext 256

What to watch for:

Respiratory Illness

Cough
Sore Throat
Chest Congestion
Fever
Muscle Aches
Fatigue

Gastrointestinal Illness

Diarrhea
Vomiting
Nausea
Fever/Chills
Headache
Stomach Cramps

Did you know?

Handwashing is the #1 way to stop the spread of disease.

Follow these simple steps to keep yourself and others healthy.



1. Wet Hands



2. Add Soap



3. Lather



4. Rinse



5. Towel Dry



6. Turn off Taps
(with towel)

To Report a Disease

Should a reportable disease come to the attention of the school, please copy this form and fax it to the Health Unit at **519-271-2195**.

PERTH DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORT FORM

NAME	DOB	AGE	SEX
ADDRESS	CITY	POSTAL CODE	
TELEPHONE	PARENTS NAME(S)		
SCHOOL	GRADE/CLASS		
DISEASE	DATE OF ONSET		
NOTES			
PHYSICIAN	TELEPHONE		
REPORTED BY	DATE		

Rashes, Skin and Scalp Infections

DISEASE	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	HOW IS IT SPREAD?	CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL?	REPORT TO PUBLIC HEALTH?
Chickenpox (Varicella)	Sudden onset of mild fever. Small red pimples which develop into blisters then become encrusted. Usually affects face, hands, neck and extremities.	Through air or through contact with blisters.	1-2 days before onset. Until all lesions are crusted.	Until all lesions are crusted (about 5 days).	Yes
Coxsackie A (Hand Foot and Mouth Disease)	Usually mild, lasts 4-6 days. Blisters on palms, soles, inside of mouth, loss of appetite, slight fever.	Through contact with nose and throat secretions and feces of infected people.	While symptomatic; maybe longer.	Do not exclude unless too ill to participate.	No
Fifth Disease	Mild, usually no fever. "Slapped cheek" rash on face, followed in 1 to 4 days by lace-like rash on trunk and legs, worse with sunlight or heat.	Spread through contact with nose and throat secretions. Avoid exposure if pregnant.	Before onset of rash.	Do not exclude unless too ill to participate.	No
Herpes Simplex (Cold Sores)	Painful ulcers in mouth; may have fever.	By direct contact with cold sores.	For several weeks during first infection and intermittently when sores return.	No exclusion.	No
Impetigo	Pustules or crusted rash on face or exposed parts of body.	By direct contact with blisters.	From onset of rash until 1 day after start of treatment with antibiotics.	Exclude until treatment has been taken for 1 full day.	No
Measles (Red Measles)	Fever, cough, runny nose, red puffy eyes followed by rash. The rash is large red spots which often join together. Starts on face, spreads rapidly over body and lasts 4 - 6 days.	Very infectious. Spread through air and direct contact with nose and throat secretions.	From 4 days before until 4 days after onset of rash.	Exclude until at least 4 days after onset of rash.	Yes
Ringworm	Depending on type of ringworm, may cause circular lesions on skin or scalp. Lesions may have slightly raised red edges and may be scaly and itchy. Other types of ringworm may affect the skin between the toes (Athletes Foot) or the nails.	By direct or indirect contact with lesions of infected persons or animals.	While rash is present.	Exclude until seen by family physician and treatment started.	No
Roseola Infantum	Fever; several days later small red spots appear on face and body. Rash lasts 1-2 days and fades quickly.	Unknown.	Not easily spread.	Do not exclude unless too ill to participate.	No
Rubella (German Measles)	Usually mild; rash and low grade fever. Rash starts on the face but spreads within 24 hours and lasts 3 days.	Spread through air and direct contact with nose and throat secretions. There is risk of severe damage to fetus if a pregnant woman gets rubella during the first half of her pregnancy.	From 7 days before to 7 days after onset of rash.	Exclude for 7 days after onset of rash.	Yes
Scabies	Very itchy rash. Usually appears on fingers, elbows, armpits and abdomen. Most intense at night. May appear as tiny red bumps, scratch marks or white, curvy, thread-like lines.	Direct skin contact. Spread from clothes and sheets only if used right after infected person has used them.	Until mites and eggs are destroyed by treatment (may need two treatments).	Exclude until 24 hours after treatment first applied.	No
Shingles (Varicella)	Painful lesions or blisters that often appear in a band or strip on a small area of the skin.	Direct contact with the fluid in the blisters.	While blisters are weeping, up to 1 week after onset.	Exclude only if affected area cannot be covered by a dressing.	No

Gastrointestinal Infections

DISEASE	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	HOW IS IT SPREAD?	CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL?	REPORT TO PUBLIC HEALTH?
VIRAL INFECTIONS					
Hepatitis A	Most children have no symptoms; may have fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, yellow skin and eyes.	Spread through contact with feces of infected person or unwashed hands; or contaminated food and water.	2 weeks before to 1 week after onset of jaundice (yellow skin).	Exclude for two weeks from onset of first symptoms, but no longer than one week after onset of jaundice.	Yes
Norovirus (Norwalk)	Nausea, vomiting, watery diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headache, low grade fever.	Spread through contact with feces of infected person or unwashed hands.	From onset of symptoms until 48 hours after last symptom.	Exclude until 48 hours after last symptom.	No
Rotavirus	Fever, vomiting, watery diarrhea, dehydration is common.	Germ excreted in stool of infected persons and by air. Spread person to person.	While symptomatic with diarrhea, usually 3-8 days.	Exclude until 48 hours after last symptom.	No
BACTERIAL INFECTIONS					
Campylobacter	Fever, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headache, loss of appetite, sometimes weakness, fatigue, blood in stool.	Germ excreted in stool. Undercooked meat or other food, unpasteurized milk, or contaminated water; contact with manure of livestock or infected pets may be source of infection.	While symptomatic with diarrhea; if untreated, 2-7 weeks.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free.	Yes
E. coli O157:H7	Diarrhea; may have blood in stool, abdominal cramps, fever, headache, no appetite, fatigue, weakness.	Spread through food or water contaminated with human or animal feces or direct contact with manure. Person to person spread is less likely.	For duration of the diarrhea.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free.	Yes
Salmonella	Sudden onset of headache, vomiting, fever, followed by diarrhea, abdominal pain and mucousy stool.	Spread through food, especially eggs and egg products, beef, poultry, unpasteurized milk.	For duration of diarrhea or longer.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free.	Yes
Shigella	Diarrhea, fever, blood and/or mucus in stool, abdominal cramps.	Germ excreted in stool of infected persons. Spread person to person and through contaminated food, water or milk; can be insect-borne.	For duration of diarrhea; if untreated, up to 4 weeks. Highly infectious.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free for 24 hours.	Yes
Yersinia	Watery diarrhea, cramps, fever, nausea, headaches and vomiting. Children are most susceptible.	Germ excreted in stool of infected persons. Spread person to person. Infected birds and animals, especially pigs, may be a source.	For duration of diarrhea, and other symptoms; if untreated, 2-3 months.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free.	Yes
PARASITIC INFECTIONS					
Cryptosporidium	Watery diarrhea, cramps, vomiting, mild fever, fatigue, loss of appetite.	Parasite excreted in stool of infected person. Spread person to person or through contact with infected animals, manure, food or water.	For duration of diarrhea symptoms may come and go.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free.	Yes
Giardia	Most children are symptom-free; may cause loss of appetite, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, foul smelling, mushy stool, excessive gas, fatigue, weight loss.	Parasite excreted in stool of infected persons. Spread person to person or through contact with infected livestock, manure or food/water contaminated with manure. Common in child care settings.	For duration of diarrhea and other symptoms, often months if untreated.	Exclude until diarrhea is gone and student is symptom-free, good handwashing should be emphasized.	Yes

Respiratory Infections

DISEASE	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	HOW IS IT SPREAD?	CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL?	REPORT TO PUBLIC HEALTH?
Common cold	Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, loss of appetite, sometimes fever.	Through coughs and sneezes, unwashed hands, objects and surfaces.	1 day before to 5 days after start of symptoms.	No exclusion.	No
Ear Infections (Otitis Media)	Earache, irritability, fever, and cold symptoms.	Does not spread.	None.	No exclusion.	No
Influenza	Sudden onset of fever, chills, headache, generalized aches and pains, loss of appetite, cough; lasts 2-7 days.	Through coughs and sneezes; unwashed hands, objects and surfaces.	Until 5-7 days after onset of symptoms.	Until symptom free.	Yes
Infectious Mononucleosis (Epstein-Barr)	Fever, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, rarely jaundice (yellow skin)	Through saliva, coughs, sneezes, kissing, unwashed hands, objects and surfaces.	Prolonged; a year or longer.	Do not exclude unless too ill to participate.	No
Strep Throat Scarlet Fever	Fever, sore throat, general discomfort and tender glands on the neck In scarlet fever, rash develops on neck, chest, underarms, elbow, groin, and inner surface of the thighs, face looks flushed, rash feels like fine sandpaper and skin peels during recovery.	Through coughs, sneezes and close contact with ill people.	Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment starts. If untreated, 10-21 days.	Exclude until 24 hours after treatment starts.	No
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Runny nose and cough. Cough gets gradually worse and occurs in spasms, face turns red or purple during coughing spells and child may vomit.	Through coughs; highly infectious.	Until 3 weeks after onset of cough if not treated, or up to 5 days of treatment.	Exclude until 5 days after start of antibiotics or 3 weeks if no treatment given. Contacts may need antibiotics or vaccine.	Yes

Other Infections

DISEASE	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	HOW IS IT SPREAD?	CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL?	REPORT TO PUBLIC HEALTH?
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	Redness, swelling, itching, pain, discharge from eye. Discharge forms dry, yellowish crusts on eyelashes.	Spread through contact with secretions from eye.	From start of symptoms until 24 hours after treatment.	Exclude until 24 hours after start of treatment.	No
Hepatitis B	Often no symptoms, may have loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, tiredness, abdominal pain and/or yellowing of the skin.	Spread through unprotected sex, blood contact, bites and from mother to baby at birth.	From weeks before symptom onset to months or years after recovery from illness, may be infectious for life.	No exclusion required.	Yes. Immediately report any bites that cause bleeding. Treatment may be indicated for close contacts under some circumstances.
Meningitis	Severe headache, fever, vomiting, stiff neck, drowsiness, confusion, coma; may develop a red pin-point rash.	Through close direct contact with respiratory secretions.	Bacterial: until treated with antibiotics. Viral: Many causative agents are not contagious, however some are.	Exclude until fully recovered.	Yes. In some cases treatment may be indicated for close contacts; very rarely, vaccinations may be required in the schools.
Mumps	Fever, headache, swollen face.	Spread through air and direct contact with nose and throat secretions.	From 7 days before to 9 days after swelling.	Exclude for 9 days after onset of swelling.	Yes

Reportable Diseases

- Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
- Amebiasis
- ◆ Anthrax
- ◆ Botulism
- ◆ Brucellosis
- Campylobacter enteritis
- Chancroid
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Chlamydia trachomatis infections
- Cholera
- ◆ Cryptosporidiosis
- ◆ Cyclosporiasis
- Cytomegalovirus infection, congenital
- ◆ Diphtheria
- ◆ E. coli O157
- ◆ Encephalitis, including,
 - i. Primary, viral
 - ii. Post-infectious
 - iii. Vaccine-related
 - iv. Subacute sclerosing panencephalitis
 - v. Unspecified
- ◆ Food poisoning, all causes
- ◆ Gastroenteritis, institutional outbreaks
- ◆ Giardiasis, except asymptomatic cases
- Gonorrhoea
- ◆ Group A Streptococcal disease, invasive
- Group B Streptococcal disease, neonatal
- ◆ Haemophilus influenzae b disease, invasive
- Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome
- ◆ Hemorrhagic fevers, including,
 - i. Ebola virus disease
 - ii. Marburg virus disease
 - iii. Dengue Fever
 - iv. Other viral causes
- ◆ Hepatitis, viral,
 - i. Hepatitis A
 - ii. Hepatitis B
 - iii. Hepatitis C
 - iv. Hepatitis D (Delta hepatitis)
- Herpes, neonatal
- Influenza
- ◆ Lassa Fever

- ◆ Legionellosis
- ◆ Leprosy
- ◆ Listeriosis
- Lyme Disease
- ◆ Malaria
- ◆ Measles
- ◆ Meningitis, acute,
 - i. Bacterial
 - ii. Viral
 - iii. Other
- ◆ Meningococcal disease, invasive
- ◆ Mumps
- Ophthalmia neonatorum
- ◆ Paratyphoid Fever
- ◆ Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- ◆ Plague
- Pneumococcal disease, invasive
- ◆ Poliomyelitis, acute
- Psittacosis/Ornithosis
- Q Fever
- ◆ Rabies
- ◆ Respiratory outbreaks in institutions
- ◆ Rubella
- ◆ Rubella, congenital syndrome
- ◆ Salmonellosis
- ◆ Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
- ◆ Shigellosis
- ◆ Smallpox
- Syphilis
- ◆ Tetanus
- ◆ Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
 - i. Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, all types
 - ii. Gerstmann-Sträussler-Scheinker Syndrome
 - iii. Fatal Familial Insomnia
 - iv. Kuru
- Trichinosis
- ◆ Tuberculosis
- ◆ Tularemia
- ◆ Typhoid Fever
- ◆ West Nile Virus Illness
- ◆ Yellow Fever
- ◆ Yersiniosis

NOTE: Diseases marked “◆” must be reported **immediately** to the Health Unit by telephone.
Other diseases should be reported the **next business day**.



To report a disease, call the Perth District Health Unit at:

519-271-7600 ext 256; Listowel area call 1-877-271-7348 ext 256.

After hours and weekends call 519-274-7363.

For disease information, visit www.pdhu.on.ca