



## COOS COUNTY *Public Health*

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Health Advisory**

Four possible cases of chickenpox have been identified in North Bend School District. Two of the cases have been clinically diagnosed, while the other two cases are suspect based on symptoms. Chickenpox is not a reportable disease so monitoring cases and controlling spread can present the Health Department with unique challenges.

The classic symptom of chickenpox is a rash that turns into itchy, fluid-filled blisters that eventually turn into scabs. The rash may first show up on the face, chest, and back then spread to the rest of the body, including inside the mouth, eyelids, or genital area. It usually takes about one week for all the blisters to become scabs. Illness lasts about 5-10 days.

Other symptoms that may appear in 1 to 2 days before the rash include:

- high fever
- tiredness
- loss of appetite
- headache

Serious complications from chickenpox include:

- bacterial infections of the skin
- dehydration
- pneumonia
- encephalitis (brain swelling)

Chickenpox spreads easily through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread by touching fluid from blisters. A person with chickenpox can spread the disease from 1 to 2 days before they get the rash until all their chickenpox blisters have formed scabs. Once someone is exposed to chickenpox, they may not develop the illness for up to 10 to 21 days after exposure.

CDC recommends two doses of chickenpox vaccine for children, adolescents, and adults. Two doses of vaccine are about 98% effective at preventing chickenpox. One dose is not enough to prevent the spread of chickenpox. Outbreaks continue to occur even in settings such as schools where most children are vaccinated with only one dose. Children who get their first or second dose of chickenpox vaccine as part of outbreak control measures may be immediately readmitted to school.

For chickenpox vaccination, call your local healthcare provider or Coos County Public Health at (541) 751-2400.