

Infectious illnesses

Symptoms, spread & exclusion guidance

This chart provides information for Early Learning Services (ELS) to support decision-making about whether a person (child or adult) should be excluded from the facility. This guidance may also be applied in schools and workplaces.

Illness	Symptoms	How it spreads	Time between exposure and showing symptoms	Exclude sick person from early learning service, school, or work until*
Rashes and skin infections				
Chickenpox 	Fever, runny nose, cough and spots with a blister on top of each spot.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed. Contact with fluid from blisters.	10–21 days (usually 14–16 days)	1 week from appearance of rash, or until all blisters have dried up and crusted.
Hand, foot and mouth	Fever, headache, sore throat, painful red blisters in/ around the mouth. 1–2 days later red blisters can appear on palms of hands, soles of feet or elsewhere on the body.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed. Contact with fluid from blisters.	3–5 days	All blisters have dried up (usually within a few days). If blisters can be covered, and child is feeling well, they will not need to be excluded.
Head lice (Nits)	Itchy scalp or scratch marks, especially behind ears. Lice (small flat insects) seen on the scalp, or their eggs (nits) on strands of hair.	Direct contact with an infested person's hair, and less commonly by contact with contaminated surfaces and objects.	Not applicable	No exclusion required. ELS/school should be informed. Treatment is recommended to kill eggs and lice**.
Impetigo (School sores)	Red sores or blisters, which burst to leave crusty, golden-brown patches. Can be itchy.	Direct contact with an infected person's sores or their clothing, bedding or towels.	Approx. 10 days	Sores have dried up or at least 24 hours after appropriate treatment** has started and sores on exposed skin are covered.
Measles 	Fever, cough, runny nose and sore/red eyes. 3–5 days later a rash appears, starting on the face and neck, before spreading down the rest of the body. The rash is not usually itchy.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed. The virus can remain in the air for up to 2 hours.	7–21 days (usually 10–14 days)	4 full days after appearance of a rash. (Note: a person is also infectious from 4 days before the appearance of a rash.)
Molluscum contagiosum	Groups of small, hard, skin-coloured, raised spots on the skin. Can appear anywhere but often in the armpit, behind the knee, or in the groin.	Direct contact with an infected person's sores or their clothing, bedding or towels. Through infected water, such as a bath.	Usually 2 weeks but can be up to 6 months.	No exclusion required.
Ringworm (Tinea infections)	Flat, itchy, scaly spots or rash on the skin with a raised red border that spreads outwards in a circle.	Direct contact with an infected person's rash or their clothing, bedding or towels.	4–14 days	No exclusion required. Swimming and skin contact should be avoided until treated with antifungal product**.
Rubella (German measles) 	Fever, swollen neck glands or sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, cough, sore, red eyes, sore joints. Red or spotty rash on the face, neck and body.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed.	14–23 days (usually 16–18 days)	7 days after the appearance of a rash and feeling well.
Scabies	Itchy rash mostly affecting the arms, legs and trunk (from the neck down to the pelvis).	Direct contact with an infected person's rash or their clothing, bedding or towels.	3–6 weeks (can be 1–4 days if had scabies before)	24 hours after the first treatment**.
Slapped cheek (Human parvovirus infection, Fifth disease) 	Fever, headache, runny nose, sore throat, followed a few days later by a bright red rash on cheeks and a pink lace-like rash on the body.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed.	4–20 days (usually 16 days)	Feeling well. If they have a rash but are otherwise feeling well, they do not need to be excluded.
Gastroenteritis illnesses / diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses				
Campylobacter  Cryptosporidium  Giardia Salmonella	Stomach pain, fever, nausea, diarrhoea and/or vomiting. Giardia may also cause bloating, flatulence and weight loss.	Consuming contaminated drinking water, raw milk, food, or undercooked food. Exposure to contaminated environmental surfaces and water sources (e.g. rivers). Contact with an infected person's or animal's faeces (poo).	Campylobacter 1–10 days Cryptosporidium 1–12 days Giardia 3–25 days Salmonella 6 hours–3 days	48 hours after a person last had diarrhoea or vomiting.
Hepatitis A 	Fever, fatigue, nausea, stomach pain, general sickness with jaundice (yellow skin) appearing a few days later. Children may have no symptoms or other symptoms such as diarrhoea, cough, runny nose, joint pain.	Consuming contaminated food, or drink. Contact with an infected person's faeces (poo).	15–50 days (usually 28–30 days)	7 days after the start of jaundice (yellow eyes/skin) and/or other symptoms.
Norovirus  Rotavirus	Stomach pain, fever, nausea, diarrhoea and/or vomiting.	Consuming contaminated food or drink. Exposure to contaminated environmental surfaces and water sources (e.g. rivers). Contact with an infected person's faeces (poo).	Norovirus 10–72 hours Rotavirus 24–74 hours	48 hours after a person last had diarrhoea or vomiting.
Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) (VTEC, Verocytotoxin-producing E. coli) 	Bloody diarrhoea, stomach pain. Can lead to serious complications requiring immediate medical attention.	Consuming contaminated drinking water, raw milk, food, or undercooked food. Exposure to contaminated environmental surfaces and water sources (e.g. rivers). Contact with an infected person's or animal's faeces (poo).	2–10 days	48 hours after a person last had diarrhoea or vomiting.
Shigella 	Diarrhoea (may be bloody), fever, nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting.	Consuming contaminated food or drinking water. Exposure to contaminated environmental surfaces. Contact with an infected person's faeces (poo).	12 hours–7 days (usually 1–3 days)	48 hours after a person last had diarrhoea or vomiting.
Respiratory illnesses				
Flu (Influenza)  Other illnesses similar to influenza: RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)  Colds (upper respiratory tract infection) COVID-19^ 	Cough, sore throat, headache, tiredness. Cold symptoms are gradual and commonly include runny nose and sneezing. Flu is usually more severe, and the symptoms may last longer. Flu symptoms are sudden and commonly include fever and muscle aches.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed.	Flu 1–4 days RSV 2–8 days Cold 1–3 days COVID-19 1–14 days (usually 2–5 days)	No fever for 24 hours, no need for medicine to reduce fever for 24 hours and no or only mild symptoms (i.e. mild cough, headache, runny/blocked nose).
Whooping cough (Pertussis) 	Runny nose, persistent mild cough followed by coughing fits; may result in vomiting, breathlessness, or a 'whoop' sound when gasping for breath between coughs.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed.	5–21 days (usually 7–10 days)	3 weeks after cough started (if no antibiotics taken). 2–5 days after starting antibiotics (timeframe depends on type of antibiotics taken).
Streptococcal sore throat (Strep throat)	Sore throat (especially when swallowing), headache, vomiting. An untreated strep sore throat can lead to rheumatic fever.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed. Direct contact and sharing drinking bottles, cutlery etc with an infected person.	1–3 days	Feeling well and/or 24 hours after antibiotic treatment** has started.
Other infections and illnesses				
Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)	Irritation (itchy, gritty, burning or mild soreness) and redness of eye. Sticky and swollen eyelids.	Direct contact with discharge from the eyes or with items contaminated by the discharge.	2–10 days (usually 3–4 days)	Eyes are not sticky or weeping.
Meningococcal disease 	Fever, headache, generally unwell, vomiting, sometimes a rash. Symptoms can get rapidly worse. Urgent treatment in hospital is required as this is a life-threatening condition.	Close or prolonged contact with an infected person's mucus (snot) or saliva.	2–10 days (usually 3–4 days)	Feeling well following discharge from hospital. Person is no longer infectious 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started.
Mumps 	Swelling of the glands around the face and neck, pain in jaw, fever, headache.	Breathing in infectious air particles from an infected person who has breathed out, sneezed or coughed. Direct contact with tissues, toys or surfaces contaminated with an infected person's mucus (snot) or saliva.	12–25 days (usually 16–18 days)	5 days after facial swelling develops.
Threadworm (Pinworm)	Itchy bottom, often worse at night. Not sleeping well, irritable and not wanting to eat as much.	Swallowing the eggs that stick to fingers and get under fingernails when scratching.	1–2 months	No exclusion required.

* Seek further advice from your healthcare provider or local public health service. You can also ask a pharmacist for treatment advice.
** Caregivers are encouraged to seek treatment advice.
^ Notifiable disease. Public health service may provide support.

-  Notifiable disease. Public health service will be notified and will manage and support people with this disease.
-  Vaccine-preventable and/or on National Immunisation Schedule. Talk to your healthcare provider to find out more about immunisations.
-  During pregnancy, seek advice from your healthcare provider or GP regarding any risks to your unborn pēpi (baby) if you get the illness and whether there are any vaccinations you can get to protect your unborn pēpi.
-  Do not go swimming in a pool if you have diarrhoea (runny poos). You need to wait until it has been at least 2 weeks since the last time you had diarrhoea.

For further information on these and other infectious diseases, scan this QR code, visit kidshealth.org.nz or call **Healthline** on **0800 611 116**.



To find the contact details for your local public health service, scan this QR code or visit tewhatuora.govt.nz/PublicHealthContacts