

Handling the exposure to varicella or Herpes Zoster in students

Varicella (chickenpox) is an acute infectious disease. It is caused by varicella-zoster virus (VZV), which is a DNA virus that is a member of the herpesvirus group. After the primary infection, VZV stays in the body (in the sensory nerve ganglia) as a latent infection. Primary infection with VZV causes varicella. Reactivation of latent infection causes herpes zoster (shingles).

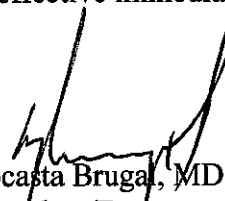
Breakthrough varicella is an infection with wild-type varicella-zoster virus (VZV) occurring in a vaccinated person more than 42 days after varicella vaccination. Breakthrough varicella is usually mild.

Consider the following recommendations when students are exposed to someone with varicella or herpes zoster.

- Follow standard infection-control precautions.
- Should ensure they are up to date with 2 documented doses of varicella vaccine.
- Two doses of varicella vaccine are recommended for all children, adolescents, and adults without evidence of immunity to varicella. Those who previously received one dose of varicella vaccine should receive their second dose for best protection against the disease.
- Laboratory evidence of immunity or laboratory confirmation of disease
- If symptoms occur, immediately remove the student from patient care, place them on sick leave, and undergo medical evaluation by her/his primary care physician and notify the Associate Dean of Students.
- For student entrance must present valid primary care physician authorization

References

Effectivity: The disposition contained in this Executive Order is effective immediately.



Yocasta Bruga, MD
President/Dean

Last revised: November 10, 2021