American Samoa Department of Health

Chickenpox Alert

The Department of Health has received recent reports of varicella also known as chickenpox, circulating in the community. It is important to stay informed and take necessary precautions to protect yourself and your loved ones, especially children. We would like to kindly remind you about the importance of varicella vaccination, commonly known as the chickenpox vaccine, for your children.

Varicella, or chickenpox, is a contagious viral infection that can cause discomfort and complications, especially in young children.

These are symptoms and signs of the infection to watch out for in children: a red, itchy rash that usually starts on the face, chest, and back before spreading to other parts of the body and develops into fluid-filled blisters that eventually crust over and heal, they may experience a fever, feel tired, some may experience a decreased appetite or reluctance to eat due to discomfort from the rash and fever, or have a headache and body aches, similar to symptoms of the flu.

If you notice these in your child, especially if they have not been vaccinated against chickenpox, it is important to consult with a healthcare for proper diagnosis and treatment.

These are some additional public health measures and personal hygiene practices to help prevent the spread of chickenpox:

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing, or using the bathroom.
- Teach your children to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Encourage children to avoid close contact with individuals who are sick with chickenpox or who have symptoms of the flu.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs, toys, and electronic devices.

Remember, vaccination remains the cornerstone of prevention against chickenpox. Ensure your child receives the recommended doses of the varicella vaccine according to their age.

If you have any questions or concerns about chickenpox or vaccination, we encourage you to promptly contact the Department of Health at epinet@doh.as or call 782-5009 for expert guidance.

Individuals experiencing a deterioration in health are advised to seek medical attention at the nearest Community Health Center (CHC) or LBJ Hospital.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping your children healthy and for your dedication to preventive healthcare. Together, we can ensure a brighter, healthier future for all our children.