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WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE C.I.

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO STUDENTS:**

Dear Student:

Toronto Public Health has received notification of a possible case of chickenpox in your school. This letter is being sent to all students to provide information about chickenpox.

**Students exposed to chickenpox**

If you have ever had chickenpox, you are protected. Although chickenpox is a mild disease for most people, some are at higher risk of becoming very ill. **High-risk groups** include newborns, pregnant women, children with leukemia, people with weak immune systems, people with serious illness or people on steroid treatment. If you are in this high-risk group, you should be seen by a physician to discuss your risk and what can be done.

**Students with chickenpox**

If you have chickenpox and have been in contact with anyone in a high-risk group (as listed above) while contagious (2 days before the rash begins to 5 days after the first blisters appear), contact these people immediately. Tell them they have been exposed to chickenpox and they need to see a doctor as soon as possible. Their physicians can call Toronto Public Health for further information.

If you get chickenpox, you can return to school when you are able to participate in all activities, even if you still have a rash. Chickenpox is most contagious 1-2 days before the rash appears when it spreads through the air by coughing and sneezing. Chickenpox is usually diagnosed after the rash appears so keeping students home from school does not stop the spread of chickenpox.

**Preventing chickenpox**

A vaccine for chickenpox is now available. If you have not yet had chickenpox or the vaccine, we recommend that you should see your doctor to get vaccinated.

Additional information on chickenpox is available in the attached Fact Sheet: [Chickenpox Disease and Vaccine Information](#)

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this in more detail, please call Virma Benjamin, Communicable Disease Investigator, from Toronto Public Health at 416 338-8516.

Yours truly,

Virma Benjamin  
Communicable Disease Investigator  
Toronto Public Health