



Varicella Exposure Letter Template—Outbreak Letter

The following template may be used by the school principal, nurse, or medical advisor to inform parents and staff about varicella in their school or day care. The letter may be updated as needed and distributed on school/day care letterhead. This outbreak letter should be sent to all parents of students and staff upon recognition of an outbreak of varicella.

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to notify you that we are currently experiencing a chickenpox outbreak at our ***school/daycare*** and that your child may have been exposed. At least 3 cases of chickenpox have been diagnosed in our ***school/daycare***.

Although chickenpox is not usually a serious illness, it can cause serious complications and can even result in death. Some children who are vaccinated will still develop varicella. These cases, also called “breakthrough,” are usually mild. Nonetheless they are still contagious. Because they are mild, they may not be recognized or excluded, therefore leaving more opportunities to infect others, especially those who are at high risk for severe disease and have contraindications for vaccination (e.g., susceptible pregnant women, immunocompromised persons).

The Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends that children who have already received one dose of varicella vaccine receive a second dose of vaccine during an outbreak. If your child has only had one dose of varicella vaccine, please contact your health-care provider about getting a second dose of varicella vaccine for your child as soon as possible. While one dose protects more than 80% of children who received it against developing chickenpox and protects against serious disease, it is insufficient to stop the circulation of chickenpox in the school community. Since there are susceptible people who either have not or cannot be vaccinated and who are at high risk of severe complications from chickenpox, stopping outbreaks among vaccinated school children is important.

If your child does develop chickenpox, he/she should be kept from attending school until the rash has scabbed over. This is true even if your child was previously vaccinated. Please help us to protect your child and stop the spread of chickenpox in our school.

Sincerely,

Administrator’s Name

Administrator’s Title

School Name